Charlestown Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan

March 2013
This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was endorsed by Cornwall Council on 15 March 2013 as a material consideration for land use planning purposes.

Recommended changes to the boundaries of the Conservation Area, as set out within this document, were authorised by Cornwall Council and also came into effect on 15 March 2013.
Charlestown
Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan

Historic Environment Service
Cornwall Council
March 2013
Acknowledgements
This report was produced by Cornwall Council.

Aerial Photograph
© Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, 2004; ACS6277

Maps
The maps are based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (c) Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution and/or civil proceedings. The map data, derived from Ordnance Survey mapping, included within this publication is provided by Cornwall Council under licence from the Ordnance Survey in order to fulfil its public function to publicise local public services. Cornwall Council Licence No. 100049047.

© Cornwall Council 2013
No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission of the publisher.
1 Introduction

The purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal

The purpose of this Conservation Area Appraisal is to clearly define the special interest, character and appearance of the conservation area, and to suggest any possible amendments to its boundary. The appraisal should then inform development control decisions and policies and act as a foundation for further work on design guidance and enhancement schemes.

Scope and structure

The appraisal will look at the historic and topographical development of the settlement, analyse its present character, identify problems and pressures and make recommendations for its future management. More detailed advice on the management of the conservation area can be found in the Charlestown Conservation Area Management Plan, which is designed to stand alongside this appraisal.

General identity and character

Charlestown is an attractive historic port popular as a tourist destination. It has great historic and cultural significance being one of the finest examples of a late eighteenth/early nineteenth century industrial harbour in Britain and the best preserved china clay and copper ore port of its period in the world. Until recently the settlement was managed as a single estate and consequently there is a quite exceptional survival of late eighteenth and nineteenth century domestic and industrial architecture and infrastructure.

Date of designation

The Charlestown conservation area was first designated in 1967 and subsequently extended in 1990.

The current designated area covers the majority of the residential settlement and two reservoirs to the west of the village that form part of the harbour flushing system.

Previous studies

The Charlestown Historic and Archaeological Assessment of 1998 undertaken by Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU now the Historic Environment Service of Cornwall Council) has been used to inform this Conservation Area Appraisal. The work of Richard and Bridget Larn has also been an important source. These and other sources of information are fully referenced in the ‘Sources’ section of this document.

The appraisal was first drafted in 2008, but has been subsequently revised and updated. This appraisal follows the current guidance set out by English Heritage in the 2011 publication Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management.

Community involvement and adoption

Within the final report this section will set down how the community involvement and public consultation has been approached and how contact has been made with key community groups. The final report will explain how information from the community was evaluated and how it was taken into account in defining the special interest and making recommendations for the area.
2 Planning Policy Context

What is a conservation area?

A conservation area is ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’.

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

What does Conservation Area status mean?

Conservation Area status provides the opportunity to promote the protection and enhancement of the special character of the defined area. Designation confers a general control over development that could damage the area’s character with strengthened controls covering the demolition of buildings, minor development and the protection of trees.

Change is inevitable in most conservation areas and it is not the intention of the designation to prevent the continued evolution of places. The challenge within conservation areas is to manage change in a way that maintains, reinforces and enhances the special qualities of the area.

Under the current Act local planning authorities are required to designate conservation areas, to keep them under review and if appropriate to designate further areas. Designation remains the principal means by which local authorities can apply conservation policies to a particular area.

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with the wider national, regional and local planning policy and guidance. Relevant documents include:

National Policy

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012

Regional Policy

- Cornwall Structure Plan 2004, particularly Policy 2 Character Areas, Design and Environmental Protection
- Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, World Heritage Site Management Plan 2005-2010

Local Policy

- Restormel Borough Council’s Local Plan 2001-2011, particularly Chapter 5 Environment and Conservation and Chapter 20 Charlestown including Policies SA36-SA42
- Cornwall Council Emerging Local Plan
- Charlestown Conservation Area Article 4(2) Direction – see Appendix 1 for details
- Design Statement for Cornwall 2009, soon to be superseded by the emerging Council Design Guide
3 Summary of Special Interest

- The village lies in an exceptionally picturesque shallow valley surrounded by woodland and fields running down to the sea at Polmear. Due to Charlestown’s land ownership very little development took place after the mid nineteenth century and consequently the historic fabric abuts the surrounding fields - an unusual phenomena in Cornwall and particularly notable in this area where the cliffs along the coast on either side of the settlement have been intensively developed. There are a significant number of mature trees both surrounding the settlement and lining the roads within.

- So many aspects of the built environment single out Charlestown as a special case: its port, significant for its early date, form, use and survival; the leat system and ponds used since the late 18th century to sluice the harbour, the substantially unaltered late eighteenth and early nineteenth century cottages and houses; the unusual survival of ancillary domestic structures such as earth closets and washhouses; the rich variety of industrial structures and the architectural quality of the public buildings.

- In addition to the exceptional survival of buildings in Charlestown there are preserved open ore and coal yards, alleyways, lanes, historic surfaces, boundaries and street furniture. As a consequence nowhere else in Cornwall is it possible to step so immediately into the ambience of an early nineteenth century working port.

- There is a striking sense of place in the village fostered by the widespread use of local materials for the public realm, domestic and industrial buildings. In addition there are a number of charming local features such as the design of the porches, railings and gates, which are particular to the village.

- Charlestown is notable as a planned late eighteenth century/early nineteenth century industrial settlement and is unique not only as a purpose built defended port, but also as the oldest and best-preserved china clay port in the world. This global significance was reflected in its inclusion in the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site.

- Charlestown has an unusual history as a single estate in the ownership of only two families from 1784–1986. Other notable aspects of its history include its role in all the main historic industries of Cornwall: mining, fishing, agriculture, engineering and china clay. Today it is a key player in tourism, Cornwall’s major industry and is a popular film location.
4 Location and Setting
Charlestown is located on the south coast of mid Cornwall on St Austell Bay, it lies immediately to the south east of St Austell, two kilometres from the town centre. The South West Coastal Path runs through the village.

4.1 Landscape setting
The village lies within a wide, shallow dry valley running down to the sea at Polmear, terminated by the harbour at the lower end. The extent of the built environment is quite modest, and is contained by farmland and fields on the eastern side, and by the ponds, woods and fields to the west. These ‘green lungs’ allow the village to retain its discrete identity despite the close proximity of St Austell and nearby developments. This rural setting is an important feature in many of the views within the settlement and links Charlestown to the wider rural landscape to the north east. To the south lies the attractive coastal scenery of seascape, beaches and cliff sides.

4.2 Setting of the conservation area
The conservation area is bounded by fields and woodland to the east and west, and the sea to the south. To the north lies the site of the former Charlestown Foundry now redeveloped for housing and live-work. This scheme incorporates elements of the historic foundry including the distinctive road-fronting façade, the historic range of the former pattern store (still to be developed) and a waterwheel. Further to the north lie Penrice Community College and the suburban residential development of St Austell that has grown to subsume the formerly distinct roadside settlements of Mount Charles and Holmbush.

The NPPF defines setting as “the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced”. This includes the experience of Charlestown from outside the Conservation Area, both from the sea and from surrounding land; from within it, especially where views of its rural and maritime setting are obtained; and when passing in or out of the Conservation Area along paths, roads and the sea connecting it with the outside world. ‘Experience’ goes beyond views and should be taken to include in particular the tranquillity of the aural environment and the degree to which the coastal ambience can be appreciated. The extent of setting is not fixed to a defined area, and may be affected by distant developments intruding into skyline views obtained from within and without Charlestown.

Crucial attributes of the setting of Charlestown include, but are not limited to, the undeveloped character of the coast when viewed from the sea and coast path, and the degree to which it can be appreciated as a settlement distinct and with separate but related origins to St Austell. This is accentuated by the unusual lack of development on its fringes postdating the mid-nineteenth century.
Assessments of the impact of proposals on the significance of Charlestown should take account of English Heritage guidance ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets’ and relevant available evidence contained within the Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record.

4.3 Historic landscape characterisation
The green fields surrounding the village are defined as ‘Recently Enclosed Land’ by the Cornwall Historic Landscape Characterisation of 1994. ‘Recreational’ land character is defined further along the coastline, at Duporth and Carlyon Bay. The wider landscape setting is defined as ‘Anciently Enclosed Land’.

Charlestown Road, the spine road of the village, runs down the gently sloping valley floor to the harbour and beach. The sandy beach is defined by two rocky outcrops with the harbour entrance set to the western end.

4.4 Geology
The underlying geology is of Lower Devonian slates, siltstones and sandstones, locally referred to as ‘killas’. Just to the north lies the Hensbarrow granite massif, surrounded by the decayed granite forming the china clay deposits of the area.

Activity and use
The harbour remains the focus of the settlement, but the village is no longer defined by the trading of the port and its associated industries. Charlestown is now predominantly a residential seaside settlement and holiday centre.

A successful business housing a fleet of historic ships, including a number of square riggers, operates from the harbour. The fleet and the harbour have both featured in film and television productions.

The village retained some industrial activity until recently, but now the majority of businesses within the settlement are connected with tourism. Changing economics coupled with rising house prices and the desirability of the village as a holiday or second home destination are fuelling pressure for the conversion of industrial buildings to residential uses which inevitably impacts on the character of the village. The number of second homes has increased over recent years affecting community vitality.

Fishing paraphernalia on the harbour walls is an important reminder that the harbour still retains links to working past.
The magnificent square rig ships in the harbour greatly enhance the character of the area.

The growing leisure use of the settlement has resulted in a significant seasonal variation in the character of the village, with a marked increase in visitor numbers during the summer months. However, out of season there is a constant visitor presence, albeit on a smaller scale.

Tourist attractions include the historic settlement and beach, the Shipwreck Centre and guided tours of the harbour and its ships. The village offers a growing number of gift shops, cafes, bars and restaurants.

Although the noise and bustle of industrial activity is gone, the village is never silent. In addition to the tourists, the soundscape includes ongoing maintenance of the ships in the harbour, the breaking of waves and the trickle of water passing along the leats.
5 Historic Environment Designations

The current historic environment designations within the Conservation Area are:

- Forms part of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site - Area A8: Luxulyan and Charlestown.
- No scheduled monuments – The scheduled monument the Long Stone, a ceremonial or ritual feature, stands to the north of the conservation boundary in the grounds of Penrice School.
- 46 Listed building designations - Some of these listings include more than one principal structure and may also include curtilage structures. The harbour piers and quays and the Methodist chapel and schoolrooms are Grade II* Listed, the remainder are Grade II.
- 1 building listed on the English Heritage Buildings at Risk register - Methodist chapel and schoolrooms, Charlestown Road.
- An Article 4(2) Direction removes certain permitted development rights in unlisted dwelling houses in the village.
- There are a number of Tree Preservation Orders.

5.1 Significance of World Heritage Site Status

Charlestown forms part of the Cornwall & West Devon Mining World Heritage Site that was designated by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2006. World Heritage Sites are inscribed for their ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ under the 1972 Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

It was considered that the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, created principally during the period 1700-1914, made a key contribution to the evolution of an industrialised economy and society in the United Kingdom and throughout the world and has survived in a coherent series of highly distinctive cultural landscapes.

World Heritage Sites have policy guidance on protection and management under circular 07/2009 and were added to land described as Article 1(5) land in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 on 1st Oct 2008. The effect of such as designation is to restrict permitted development rights for some types of minor development on the land. The area within its boundary is subject to a number of strategic policies detailed in its Management Plan guided by the site’s mission and aims.
6 Historic Development

See Figure 1 Historical Development Map

6.1 Prehistoric

Charlestown lies in an area rich in prehistoric monuments but no discoveries have been recorded within the Conservation Area. An extensive Bronze Age cemetery landscape of up to twenty burial barrows is recorded to the north-west of the village, in the area of Gwallon Downs. This former downland is now developed with Penrice School and surrounding residential estates and no above ground remains of the barrows are visible. Antiquarians excavated a number of the barrows in the eighteenth century and cremation urns containing human remains were recorded. A scheduled Bronze Age menhir or standing stone, known as The Longstone, survives within the grounds of the school.

6.2 Medieval Polmear

Charlestown as we know it today dates largely from a planned development of the late eighteenth century. However, this development overlies two medieval hamlet settlements: Higher and Lower Polmear. First recorded as Porthmeur in 1403, the place name derives from the Cornish elements of Porth meaning ‘cove’ and meur meaning ‘big or great’ and contrasts with Porthpean to the west meaning ‘small cove’.

A surviving pattern of medieval fields can be traced around the former hamlets, particularly to the east of the village.

6.3 Eighteenth Century Polmear

Little further information about the settlement exists until the eighteenth century. Thomas Martyn’s map published in 1748 shows the two small hamlets: Lower Polmear at the head of the beach and Higher Polmear further inland. A reconstruction of the pre-Charlestown landscape, based on map analysis and fieldwork, was devised by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU) as part of its Historic and Archaeological Assessment of Charlestown in 1998.

It depicts Lower Polmear as a group of buildings close to the shore, either side of a water channel which empties onto the beach (possibly an adit portal, draining the linear series of mine shafts which entered the village from the north from an extension of the mines at Holmbush and Boscoppa). There was no harbour at this point, but vessels would have been dragged onto the shore to offload fish and to export ore from the mines.

On the eastern side of the water channel lie a fish cellar (1 Quay Road thought to date to c.1740 and still partially extant) and a row of cottages, which presumably housed fishermen. On the western side lie a scattering of buildings including the cottage and adjacent business premises at 21 Charlestown Road, which may have been a former inn. These buildings, set at an angle to the current road, appear to relate to an earlier road alignment.

Higher Polmear, further inland, survives as Polmear Farm, with further indications of an agricultural complex to the north west, now 91-109 Charlestown Road. The CAU reconstruction suggests these buildings predate the development of Charlestown Road and were originally aligned to a road running to the west.

In 1790, just prior to the development of Charlestown, the population was recorded as 9.
6.4 Industrial Revolution – late 18th century

The late eighteenth century saw an economic boom in the St Austell area with an intensification of mineral extraction and the rapid development of the china clay industry. The transport infrastructure of the area was put under great pressure. The small size of the existing medieval harbours and their distance from the main mining areas caused difficulties and beaching the ever-larger vessels required for the bulky cargoes was problematic and hazardous with a number of craft lost during bad weather.

The proximity of the sheltered cove at Lower Polmear to St Austell led to the increased use of the beach for servicing the mines and the nascent china clay industry. By the 1780s there are indications that a coal yard had been established here.

6.5 The creation of Rashleigh’s Charlestown – 1784-1800

In 1784 Charles Rashleigh acquired Polmear as part of a larger land deal and recognised the commercial opportunities of the site.

Work began in 1790/1 and within a decade his plans for an efficient industrial port were substantially complete. Polmear became known as ‘Charles Town’ very soon after works commenced, in recognition of the ambition of Rashleigh’s scheme. Charles Hatchett travelling through the county by horse in 1796 as part of a tour of England and Scotland’s mining districts, recorded in his diary:

‘Went with Mr C and Mr Jonathan Rashleigh to see Charles Town built by the former. The town, the pier of granite and a considerable wet dock which at high water has a depth of 15 feet, with rope walk, store houses and fish cellars including the improved lands about, has been done upon the sole plan and at the sole expense of Mr C Rashleigh upon his own estate – a wonderful work for a private Gentleman’.

The new development began with the construction of a harbour, designed by John Smeaton, the foremost engineer of the day. In 1790 the outer breakwater was constructed and by 1792 the excavation of an inner basin or wet dock began. Originally the basin was substantially smaller than the existing arrangement, but its excavation was nevertheless a major engineering undertaking, requiring quarrying of the hillside. In 1793 the eastern breakwater was built forming an outer basin, and a gun battery built on Crinnis Head to defend the harbour. In order to keep the wet dock topped up and the harbour scoured of silt deposits an extensive flushing system was devised. As the valley contained no suitable water source a seven mile leat system brought water from the Luxulyan Valley into two large reservoir ponds located on the hillside above the harbour. These ponds were then used to power other industrial activities including a waterwheel for Charlestown Mill to the north. The leat and the reservoirs are still extant.
From the new harbour copper ore was exported to the smelters in South Wales with a return import cargo of coal to power the engines of the local mines. China clay and china stone were exported to the potteries in the Midlands and timber and limestone were imported.

In addition to the harbour the new development included numerous ore floors, china stone yards, and coal and timber yards. These large, open, cobbled areas were essentially holding bays for the storage of goods in transit. The Rashleigh Arms car park is a good survival of an ore floor, with its cobbled surface containing a varied range of geological types around the world imported as ballast through the harbour.

A new wide route into the settlement was created to accommodate the continuous stream of horses and carts that connected the harbour to the extraction sites inland. Known as the Great Charlestown Road it remains one of the widest approaches to any settlement in Cornwall.

Rashleigh developed further the existing pilchard fishing industry and Charlestown became one of the most significant fishing stations along this area of the coastline. Four seining companies operated from the settlement: the Content, the Rashleigh, the Friend’s Endeavour and the Union. Each company had their own cellar premises for the processing of the catches and storage of equipment. Former cellars survive at 1 Quay Road (Content), Barkhouse Lane (Union and Friend’s Endeavour) and West

The mill to the north of the settlement was built in the late eighteenth century
Porthmear Cottages, Duporth Road. Other structures were used as fish cellars at various times. The remains of pressing holes often provide evidence of this former use.

Ancillary works necessary for the export and fishing industries formed part of the new industrial settlement. Shipbuilding and repairs were carried out at the north end of the inner basin with a shipwrights yard and smithy depicted on an 1825 survey. A ropewalk, used for the manufacture of ropes, was laid out to the north of the harbour in 1792 and survives in a clearly recognisable form (a rare survival, as the majority of ropewalks have been redeveloped). A barkhouse is remembered in Barkhouse Lane, where ropes, sails and nets were soaked with bark chippings to tanninise them to aid preservation. A number of cooperages operated from the village producing wooden casks for a variety of uses including the exportation of pilchards, beer, high quality china clay and vinegar. Limestone imported through the harbour was burnt in limekilns to create lime for the building trade and agricultural fertiliser. A large kiln was located on the quayside, now the site of the octagonal harbormaster’s hut. Other kilns were located at what is now Charlestown Pottery, and survive in an altered form.

Mining activity continued in the immediate vicinity of the village and the numerous shafts, tips and dumps are well documented in historic maps. As well as extraction and export, Charlestown also had two Blowing Houses, later known as Smelting Houses, where metal was extracted from the raw ores through exposure to high temperatures. The site of one Blowing House was located to the north of the village, adjacent to Charlestown mill.

Agriculture continued to form part of the economy of the settlement as evidenced by the survival of the agricultural complexes of the earlier hamlet of Higher Polmear; Polmear Farm and West Polmear Farm (now 91-93 Charlestown Road). A number of high prestige structures survive from the West Polmear complex including the large brick and stone granary and the granite ashlar barn. The scale of the granary and the use of expensive and high status materials for the structures has led to suggestions that this complex was the home farm of the Duporth estate.

During the pre-industrial years the small number of irregular fields around Higher Polmear were surrounded by downland. Part of Rashleigh’s plan for the new settlement included the enclosure and improvement of this land. His late eighteenth century enclosures can be easily distinguished by the use of straight hedge boundaries contrasting with the earlier substantial Cornish hedges of the Anciently Enclosed Land.

In 1791 at the beginning of Rashleigh’s enterprise the population of the settlement was 26 and by the following year this had risen dramatically to 97. A more gradual pattern of expansion continued, and in 1801 the population of the settlement stood at 300. A nautical chart drawn in 1795 records the considerable development of the former Polmear settlements including the extension of the line of cottages to the north east of the new harbour, further dwellings constructed along the north western side stretching further inland to include 11, 51, 55-65, 47, 49 Charlestown Road and Charlestown Hotel (now known as Pier House Hotel) above the western side of the harbour, which was built in 1793. Its three-storey form demonstrates the ambitions Rashleigh had for his new industrial community.

In common with many other industrial communities in Cornwall the new settlement had a Methodist meeting house, built in 1799 on Charlestown Road on the site now occupied by a later chapel.
6.6 Early Nineteenth century copper boom

At the turn of the century the port, as initially conceived by Rashleigh, was substantially finished with some 80% of today’s settlement established by this time. Charlestown was now the principal port exporting china clay in Britain. At this point Rashleigh refocused his efforts and finances on landscaping the grounds of his private house at Duporth, which lay half a mile to the east of Charlestown. However, subsequent financial difficulties and personal legal battles were to leave him unable to take advantage of the opportunities created by the mid Cornwall copper boom in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Whilst the harbours at Pentewan to the south and Par to the north were expanded, the limitations of the harbour at Charlestown became more apparent: the narrow entrance and dog-leg turn into the basin constrained the size of vessels that could be accommodated, and the outer harbour ran dry at low tide restricting its use considerably.

In 1823 Rashleigh died leaving sizeable debts. His family were forced from Duporth and the estate was put up for sale.

6.7 Nineteenth Century Charlestown under the Crowders

In 1825 Charlestown became the property of the Crowder family, Rashleigh’s chief creditors who were to continue in ownership of the port for the next 161 years, finally selling up in 1986. A survey was drawn up in order to settle Rashleigh’s Will and shows the village that the Crowders inherited. This 1825 survey records the further development of the settlement since the drawing of the nautical chart in 1795 – see the historical development map. Charlestown now extended as far as 107 Charlestown Road where a row of houses lined the western side of the new wide road. Behind these houses lay the extended West Polmear farm complex. On the opposite side of the road was an extensive copper ore floor. The rest of the settlement lay to the south: an intensive development of housing, industrial buildings and yards, with Polmear farm to the east, which was also extended during this period.

Despite the ongoing limitations of the harbour, Charlestown continued to be very busy with extensive trade from the surrounding mining industry. One of the leading tin mines during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century lay to the west at Polgooth and by 1864 the local mine Charlestown United Ltd. employed over 500 people. Mining activity in the immediate vicinity of the village took place in the surrounding woodland and fields.

By the 1870s, however, copper mining in this area of Cornwall had collapsed and the notoriously elusive pilchard shoals had disappeared. Fortunately the china clay industry continued to expand and, following the siting up of the neighbouring Pentewan harbour, most of the clay from the St Stephens area was transported through Charlestown.

In 1870, after decades of calls to improve the harbour facilities, the inner dock was dramatically expanded: the basin almost doubled in length with the excavation of the area formerly used as a shipwrights yard. However, the entrance remained a limiting feature, as did the lack of mineral tramway link to the inland extraction sites. Further plans for expansion were proposed in 1874 but never executed.

General industrial development continued to take place during the period with the Charlestown Foundry established in 1827 on a site opposite the earlier blowing house and mill to the north of the village. Initially the
foundry produced specialist equipment for the mines, then later for the china clay industry. The site continued in commercial operation with a range of light industrial uses until the beginning of the twenty-first century.

A Naptha Works was established to the north of the settlement some time between the drawing of the 1825 estate survey and the tithe map of 1842, producing an inflammable liquid that was used in crystal form to kill moths and in ‘naptha-flares’ to provide artificial light. In 1834 a second, less successful smelting house was established in the village by John Taylor and Sons to the north-east of the harbour.

The increased scale and range of industrial activity led to a steep rise in the workforce and in 1847 Charlestown was established as a parish in its own right, rather than part of the parish of St Austell. The Census records of 1841 describe the varied trades being plied from the settlement including mariners, shipwrights, merchants, carpenters, blacksmiths, cooperers, wheelwrights, foundrymen, various general labourers and miners. There were also seven milliners, three shoemakers and a tailor suggesting a certain level of disposable income amongst the inhabitants. By 1851 the Census records a population of 2,871.

The tithe map of 1842 illustrates how the settlement had expanded since the 1825 survey. The most notable area of development during this period was the number of residential properties: with further houses built along Quay Road and to the west along Duporth Road. The boundary of the village extended to the north with a row of cottages and houses on the eastern side of Charlestown Road (nos. 60-82) and on the western side opposite the junction with Church Road. Church Road already existed as a route to Holmbush but was undeveloped until this period when a mixture of cottages and houses were built on the northern side.

As the settlement matured and the population increased, the infrastructure servicing the community developed. The early meeting house on Charlestown Road was demolished and a new larger Methodist Chapel built in 1827. By the mid nineteenth century the Anglican church recognised the significance of the growing community at Charlestown and in 1851 St Paul’s church was consecrated; built opposite the new cottages and houses on Church Road. In 1833 a warm seawater bath was constructed on the outer harbour adjacent to the limekiln, which heated the water. In addition to the many industrial workers Charlestown had a steady stream of visiting sailors whose requirements led to the building of a further public house, the Rashleigh Arms in c.1840 on the junction between Charlestown Road and Quay Road and reputedly a brothel at ‘Eleven Doors’; a court development to the rear of 111/113 Charlestown Road.
St Paul’s church was built by the architect Christopher Eales in the Early English Gothic style.

By the drawing of the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey in 1882 the extent of Charlestown was barely altered from that recorded on the 1842 tithe map. However, there were some significant areas of infill including two rows of cottages, 73-85 (odd) Charlestown Road built on the site of a former ore floor and some buildings and outbuildings no longer extant on the western side of Charlestown Road south of the junction with Church Road. As the population did not rise between the drawing of the two maps, the further development suggests the workers were living in more salubrious conditions. Education for the adults and children in the village was not neglected - in 1869 a reading room and library opened, whilst the local children attended classes in the chapel. Following the 1870 Education Act a purpose-built school was constructed on the site of a former ore floor behind nos. 79-85 Charlestown Road.

Further development at the end of the century included the terrace of coastguard houses constructed in 1892 overlooking the harbour and beach.

Row of coastguard cottages built in 1892 to replace the large building at the head of the harbour

The Crowder family chose to live to the north of the settlement where they built The Grove, a country house complete with stables and coach house, which lies outside the present Conservation Area boundary. Although away from the bustle and industry of the quay, initially the house was adjacent to the smelting works and corn mill and due south of the naphtha works. By the drawing of the 1907 Ordnance Survey map, however, the industrial buildings were no longer in use.

6.8 Early Twentieth century

During the first half of the twentieth century the export of china clay continued to be the dominate industry in Charlestown. By this period clay was piped in a slurry form to the port through a system powered by gravity. It was
then processed: dried, cut into blocks and shipped. Two large yards to dry and store the clay (dries) were constructed in the village: Carbean Clay Dry in 1906/7, sited to the rear of the Foundry, and Lovering Dry started in 1907 and completed in 1908, extant but roofless, located to the east of Polmear Farm. This dry is unique in that it is the only surviving china clay dry with its limhay directly linked to a harbour via a tunnel.

The Great War caused a temporary hiatus in china clay production, but the industry was soon back at full stretch once peace was declared. However, the size constraints of the harbour entrance, the capacity of the basins and the inconvenience of road links from the clay district to the port through St Austell town centre, ultimately led Charlestown losing trade to the larger, deepwater port of Fowey and tidal port of Par, both of which had rail links to the extraction sites. By 1945 it was no longer commercially viable for china clay to be shipped by the small vessels that the harbour could accommodate and consequently Carbean dry was largely demolished shortly after the Second World War. The lower dry continued in use until 1968 as the harbour continued a low level of trade. In 1971 the harbour entrance was finally enlarged and new electric lock gates installed.

The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1907 shows the settlement little developed since the First Edition map was drawn in 1882: the notable additions being the two china clay dries and a china clay works on the western side of the village to the north of Lower Pond. In addition, a scattering of houses and outbuildings were built and a Sunday school to the east of St Paul’s church, in the building formerly used as the Reading Room.

The Great War had little direct impact on the village and by the drawing of the 1936 Ordnance Survey Revision the only apparent development in the settlement was a range of china clay cellars (now converted into the Charlestown Shipwreck and Heritage Centre) and a weighbridge to the north of the inner harbour.

Charlestown Road part of the late nineteenth/early twentieth century development of the village

Considerable changes took place in Charlestown during the Second World War: The Foundry was requisitioned as were Duporth, Charles Rashleigh’s former home used by the Indian Army Services Corp and subsequently American troops, and The Grove which housed evacuee children. The harbour trade was restricted to allow use by the Admiralty to fit-out minesweepers and the beach was defended by two pill boxes and tank traps. On 5th July 1940 the first bomb that fell on Cornwall fell at Charlestown exploding in a field in front of The Grove.
6.9 Later Twentieth century to the present

By the end of the century the years of benign neglect by the Charlestown Estate were becoming an issue and it was clear that serious amounts of money would have to be invested to bring many of the residences up to suitable living standards – many still had no bathroom facilities. Reduced port revenues led to the estate finally being put up for sale in 1984. The next decade marked a period of considerable instability for residents, with the estate passing through the hands of a number of asset stripping companies. Peppercorn rents that had been kept artificially low were raised to market levels and houses where tenancies became free were left empty as ambitious plans for future redevelopment of the harbour and village were proposed, but ultimately came to nothing. The built environment of the village was in a poor state of repair and there was a great deal of anxiety and uncertainty.

Finally, in 1993 Square Sail a Bristol-based company bought the harbour and various surrounding buildings and land to house and operate their fleet of square sail tall ships. In addition to sailing and corporate entertaining the Square Sail fleet specialises in film and television productions attracting visitors to the village keen to visit recognisable locations. The general unspoilt character of the village itself attracts film makers and tourists, in 1976 the former china clay cellars on Quay Road were converted into the Shipwreck and Heritage Centre. Charlestown is acknowledged as appearing in more films and television series than any other location in Cornwall.

Following its comprehensive refit during the Second World War The Foundry remained in operation until 2003. New light industrial and engineering businesses were also attracted to the village and other businesses such as Partech electronics and the Cornish Smoked Fish Company successfully operated from historic buildings.

The majority of the houses and cottages were sold off incrementally on a freehold basis and the buildings were brought up to modern living standards. The new church hall was constructed in the 1970’s and is an important focus of village life.

6.10 Historic associations

Charlestown has strong historic associations with its founder Charles Rashleigh (1747-1823), who gives his name to the settlement. The Rashleighs were merchants in Fowey from the sixteenth century, building their country house at Menabilly in the early seventeenth century. Charles, one of the younger sons, made his own fortune through practising law in St Austell and London, land purchases, mining interests and establishing the first St Austell bank in 1774. In 1781 he moved from his townhouse in St Austell, now the White Hart Hotel, to Duporth, a country house set in landscaped grounds that he built overlooking the sea on the cliff top above the cove that would later become Charlestown.

However, in later life he was forced into bankruptcy following a series of legal disputes and was consequently forced to sell Duporth and Charlestown to pay off his creditors.
7 Archaeological Potential

Charlestown has potential for standing and buried archaeological remains relating to its historic development. Evidence of the pre-Charlestown landscape, origins of the planned industrial settlement, development and evolution may be present in its below-ground archaeological record and in the standing fabric of its buildings.

In particular there is archaeological potential for:

- Remains relating to the **medieval hamlets of Higher and Lower Polmear** – evidence for early commercial activity, agriculture, road network and mining activity.
- The identification of **surviving buildings pre-dating Charlestown**. There is potential for earlier fabric to be masked behind later refronting and remodelling.
- Remains relating to the **harbour, maritime trade, associated industries and activities** including earlier phases of the harbour, the leat system and reservoirs, evidence of fish cellars, boatyard, the rope walk, ore floors, china clay floors, coal yards and timber stores.
- Evidence relating to **mining and the china clay industries and processing** – evidence of mining, china clay dries and associated features such as pipes, china stone processing and the two blowing houses in the village (later smelting houses).
- Evidence of the **standing stone** that once stood near the battery until the early 19th century, know as the ‘Tregeagles Hat’.
- **Other industrial archaeology** – for example evidence of Charlestown Mill, the Naptha Works and the Foundry.
- Evidence relating to **agricultural activity** – based around the two farm complexes of Polmear and West Polmear – the possible ‘Home Farm’ of the wider Duporth Estate.
- **Building archaeology** has the potential to give further evidence for how the village expanded. Surveys undertaken to date have revealed a complex pattern of changing uses and adaptation.
- There is also potential for evidence of further **prehistoric activity**.
- **Intertidal Archaeology** - Generically around the Cornish coast there is a potential for submerged and buried paleo-landscapes dating between c.7000BC and c.4000BC between the 30m and 9.5m contours beneath MSL. We have little current evidence for how this background potential may have been modified at Charlestown, however, its further assessment and evaluation should form a part of any inshore development proposals.
8 Settlement Character

See Figure 2 Townscape Analysis Map

8.1 Understanding character

The following analysis is intended to give an understanding of the different features that contribute towards the village’s character, and make it of special interest. It is hoped that by identifying and highlighting these separate elements they will form the basis for maintaining and enhancing the village in the future – to ensure that its special character is sustained and enhanced.

8.2 Topography and settlement form

Charlestown’s distinctive topography and settlement pattern form an important part of its unique character and strong sense of place.

Influence of geomorphology

The nature of the physical landscape of Charlestown greatly influenced the development of the settlement. Its sheltered natural cove initially attracted early fishermen and then presented an ideal location for a harbour during the early industrial period. The presence of minerals in the surrounding countryside was also a determining factor in the further expansion of the port. Although there was no river, early springs and wells would have provided a water supply before the complicated series of ponds and leats were constructed in the late eighteenth century. The wooded valley would have provided shelter for the early settlers and this along with the fertile soil encouraged the development of the farming hamlet of Higher Polmear in the medieval period.

Spatial Analysis

Although the greater part of Charlestown is a late eighteenth/early nineteenth century industrial settlement the village is in fact a palimpsest including surviving features from the earlier landscapes of Higher and Lower Polmear. This has resulted in a more complex and multi-layered plan than other purely industrial Cornish settlements.

Rather than following and addressing the existing roads, which date from the industrial period, some buildings such as 91-99 Charlestown Road, 2-7 Quay Road and 21 Charlestown Road are set at distinctive angles illustrating the course of earlier routes (see the CAU reconstruction of late 18th century Charlestown).

Other visual reminders that Charleston’s development was many layered include two small areas of fairly random development (including former outhouses, stables, barns and a granary) indicating the smallholdings of Higher Polmear (the earliest part of which predates the industrial development) and the group of agricultural buildings which may have been the home farm for Duporth.

However, undoubtedly the dominant character of the settlement form is its regularity: reflecting its development as a planned industrial settlement. The road pattern is based on the main spinal route running along the floor of the valley to the harbour. It is typical of a coastal settlement to have such a road leading to the shore, but the unusual width of the carriageway indicates the industrial nature of the traffic it accommodated. Due to the topography, settlement pattern and built form the rooftscape is often highly visible and is an important
characteristic, particularly in long views from the elevated coastal path.

The harbour was and remains the focal point of the settlement: strongly enclosed by high walls surrounding the sunken, excavated basin, with quaysides well below road level. The open space is strongly defined by former industrial buildings fronting the roadside to the west and cottage rows overlooking the basin to the east.

The harbour is the focal point of Charlestown and the surrounding historic fabric addresses its form.

It is notable that all the open spaces within the settlement originally had an industrial use and there are no civic-type squares. The former ore floors and yards are a particularly characteristic feature: some have been redeveloped, but a significant number survive. The open nature of these sites suits the needs of the village for the continued commercial activity and for car parking areas.

The main car park in Charlestown was originally a coal yard. Parts of its originally cobblestone floor are still extant.
The former industrial complexes have larger footprints than the domestic buildings and often incorporate enclosed yards with buildings set gable end to the road frontage.

In common with many other industrial settlements in Cornwall the dominant form of housing is the linear cottage row and terrace. In Charlestown these rows are interspersed with detached, higher status houses reflecting the prosperity of the community. The rows of cottages are variously set behind long front gardens or hard against the pavement edge, with gardens to the rear. The detached, higher status buildings set within gardens have a more varied siting although many conform to the build lines of neighbouring rows and terraces.

**8.3 Key views, vistas and landmarks**

Charlestown’s key views, vistas and landmarks include:

- Views from the upper part of the village down the valley and out to sea. The green landscape setting of pasture fields, low hedges and mature trees are important elements of these wide ranging views. In the distance, to the east the Gribben Head daymark is a distinctive landmark.

- Views of the settlement when approached from both directions from the South West Coast Path, and also views when approached by and viewed from marine craft.

- The 1971 spire of St Paul’s church is the principal landmark of the northern part of the village, and dominates views set amidst mature trees.
• The tall round chimney of the 1907/1908 china clay dry forms one of the principal landmarks of the lower village. Of stone construction to the lower levels, the stack rises in brick with decorative mouldings to the lip and is ringed by iron reinforcing straps.

The chimney at Lovering’s china clay dry rising above the surrounding rooftops defines many views

• Harbour views featuring the robust granite piers and working quaysides, the masts and rigging of Square Sail’s tall ship fleet and the overlooking pastel painted terrace of Quay Road.

8.4 Built environment

Charlestown’s built environment survives in a remarkably complete form, mainly due to the continuity of ownership by two landlords from 1784-1986 and the conservative management regime of the Charlestown Estate.

The village was planned as an industrial settlement and its surviving built environment reflects this: still retaining the essential character of a working port despite widespread change of use. The design and construction of the settlement, although determined by functional requirements, has resulted in an extremely picturesque and attractive townscape.

The majority of buildings date from the late eighteenth century development of Charlestown and its subsequent early–mid nineteenth century extension. However, a number of structures survive that predate the development of the port and relate to the earlier settlements of Higher and Lower Polmear.

8.4.1 Building types

Industrial structures

The important group of industrial structures relating to the port and its ancillary industries are crucial to the character of Charlestown. Generally clustered around the harbour basin, these structures are characterised by their plainness of form, utilitarian detailing and relatively large footprint. Many present gable end elevations to the main road with deep plots including yard areas to the rear.
The former use of this building as a warehouse can be read in its surviving large doors and gable dormer which probably originally housed a winch.

The principal and dominant industrial feature is the **harbour** that survives little altered from its late nineteenth century form. The construction of the late eighteenth century inner basin includes partially cut bedrock but is predominantly granite with later additions and repairs in concrete. The two bays at its northern end, part of the extension of the basin in 1871, are of granite construction finished with curved granite kerbs. Along the eastern side are china clay cellars rising to road level.

China Clay would have been loaded into the cellars from trap doors on Quay Road and collected by tram from the openings at harbour level. The earliest cellars are constructed from granite in four bays with three later reinforced concrete bays adjoining to the south. In the south east corner of the inner basin are two rubble masonry walls - all that survives from late nineteenth century ore hutches, built for the temporary storage of copper prior to shipping. The early twentieth century wide concreted arch in the north eastern corner of the inner basin connects Loverings china clay dry to the harbour by means of a tunnel: a unique survival and important evidence of the evolving nature of the working landscape.
The arch at the north eastern corner of the harbour connects to Loverings china clay dry

The sturdy outer basin walls of the harbour constructed according to Smeaton’s plans in 1791 – west wall, and 1793 – the east and west wall is faced with ashlar granite blocks but the sea wall to the east of the harbour is of Devonian limestone, almost certainly from the Plymouth area. However, a small section close to the shoreline of the earlier wall is constructed from random faced masonry. The quay area of the eastern wall is protected by a tall parapet wall also of granite masonry.

Two good examples of weighbridge buildings form part of the complex. These simple single storey buildings feature multi-paned windows, single brick chimneystacks and large cast iron weighing platforms.

At the entrance to the inner harbour with good views of the entrance, gates, outer harbour and approaches is the harbour masters hut. Constructed in c.1885 on the site of the former lime kiln it has an unusual octagonal plan and conical roof.

Two former coastguard stations still survive. The earliest was at 6 Charlestown Road, an early 19th century house which was converted some time between 1856 when Charlestown was not mentioned in the survey of coastguard services and 1882 when it was recorded in the Ordnance Survey map. By 1892 coastguard houses were recorded to the west of the harbour. This row of seven granite cottages with long garden plots to front and rear are still extant.
The single storey **count house** or accounts house for the harbour still survives opposite the early coastguard house. Recorded as a count house and weight machine the structure sits above the road level indicating the site of the former weighbridge.

To the east lie the **reservoir ponds, leat and sluice houses** part of the harbours’ flushing system. The system is one of the principal elements of Charlestown’s industrial character. The two large ponds were used to impound water which was then used to sluice silt out of the harbour at very low tides. The leats run through the lower part of the settlement through tunnels and conduits before discharging into the dock and are fed by a wider system running seven miles from the Luxulyan Valley. A system of cables and pulleys carried on poles to operate the sluice gate on the lower pond still survives. Despite their industrial origins the ponds have developed an ornamental quality due to the planting of surrounding trees and the creation of an island on Upper Pond. Historically they were used for boating and shooting.

The remains of a number of **fish cellars** survive. Typical diagnostic features include beam sockets relating to the pressing of fish in wooden casks. Known fish cellars are marked on the townscape analysis map.

The tall chimney of the **china clay pan kiln** of 1907-08 is a prominent landmark in the village, however the long, low form of the dry itself is now roofless and relatively hidden. This complex includes a number of technical innovations, including a pipeline from the Carclaze pit for the movement of clay slurry to the dry and a tunnel and tramway system connected to the harbour for the transportation of the dried clay blocks.

Evidence for a number of **limekilns** survives at the harbour entrance and also at the former Charlestown pottery. These structures were built into the slopes of the land to allow for the top loading of lump limestone and culm. Arched openings at the base gave access to the burnt lime, which was then used for fertilizer and mortar.

A Listed single storey **smithy** survives to the north at 165 Charlestown Road. Now converted for residential use, its L-shape plan incorporates a former stable for shoeing and wheel-making at the front and a larger forge room behind.
The former mid nineteenth century smithy at 165 Charlestown Road – the single storey form and irregular window arrangement are indicative of its former use.

**Agricultural buildings**

Buildings relating to the two farm complexes continue to form part of the distinctive character of the village.

The complex of Polmear Farm, earlier Higher Polmear, includes an ‘L-shaped’ farmhouse, ranges of farm buildings, the remains of a former orchard and yard enclosures.

To the west of Charlestown Road between the two ponds lie the remnants of an impressive farm complex the scale and prestige of which suggests it may have been the **home farm for the Duporth estate**. Surviving structures include the substantial three storey granary and the former threshing barn with waterwheel outshut. These agricultural buildings are set behind two rows of houses which front Charlestown Road. The lower range (nos. 91-99 odd) date from the late eighteenth century and originally 91 and 93 were a piggery, granary and stables. As the farm was developed during the early nineteenth century buildings were erected running along the grain of the long land plots and a double yard arrangement was formed: this has now largely been lost through subsequent subdivision into gardens and additional back plot development.

The barn on the northern side of Eleven Doors is constructed from squared granite blocks.
Outbuildings off Charlestown Road now converted into domestic buildings and garages were part of a former farm

Ecclesiastical, institutional and commercial structures

There is a small group of religious, community and commercial buildings with large footprints and high status materials. **Charlestown Wesleyan Chapel** like many Nonconformist chapels takes the form of a tall box-like structure attached to a substantial schoolroom extension to the rear with unusual clerestory roofs. It is one of the earliest galleried chapels in Cornwall and the later interior (possibly by Cornish architect Silvanus Trevail) has a high level of completeness.

**St Paul’s Church**, Church Road is a substantial structure: the apex of the nave roof reaching the top of the west end tower, and forms the principal focus of the northern part of the village. The unusual glass-reinforced plastic spire was added in 1971. A lych gate gives access to the churchyard and a late nineteenth century single storey schoolroom to the east, presents its gable end to the road.

**Charlestown School** was built in 1895 to the rear of one of the plots fronting onto Charlestown Road. It shares the same built form of the nearby agricultural buildings with its linear form running along the grain of the long land plot. The large arched windows are typical of school buildings of this period.

The former school was built with large windows to provide light for the pupils

The **Pier House Hotel** (originally the Charlestown Hotel) an imposing three storey structure, is one of the most dominant buildings in the harbour area and frames views from the outer harbour into the village.

The double fronted façade of **The Rashleigh Arms** stands adjacent to and complements the Wesleyan Chapel. The main body of the building lies to the rear and the extent of its six bay side elevation is clearly visible from Charlestown Road.
Residential buildings

Charlestown has a wide range of residential properties from small cottages to high status country houses. The most dominant residential form is the double-fronted cottage two and three windows wide with central doorways, many with porches. This building type is notable for being larger than most workers’ housing of the period and indicates the high standard of living available to the more skilled workers. However, the village did provide more modest accommodation in the form of single fronted cottages, often in rows set away from the main spine road with small enclosed front gardens. Even more basic were the back-to-back cottages none of which survive in their original form. However, at 51-63 Charlestown Road the front row of cottages still survive in an upgraded form following the demolition of the back row in the 1960s.

The main façade of the early nineteenth century Rashleigh Arms Hotel

51-63 Charlestown Road present single storey elevations to the road where originally there would have been the façades of back-to-back houses

The Georgian origin of so many of the domestic buildings is reflected in the symmetry of their façades. More irregular arrangements are sometimes an indication of alterations, incremental extensions, infill developments, amalgamation and subdivision.

The high survival level of ancillary outbuildings is a particularly notable feature of the village and gives a completeness to the townscape. Wash houses, privies, earth closets, coal houses and other ancillary buildings form this unusual group and survive due to the low levels of change that have occurred in Charlestown compared to other Cornish settlements.
The outbuildings to the rear of 66-80 Charlestown Road are an important record of a former way of life.

**Larger private residences** include 6 Charlestown Road, the former Coastguard Station: a three storey, three window wide symmetrically fronted stuccoed property with central door and porch detail. It directly addresses the inner basin and encloses the harbour area to the north. The Beeches, 60 Charlestown Road, formerly The Villa is a large property set in private grounds. The largest house in the village is The Grove, now a nursing home, to the north of the Conservation Area. This was the country house of the Crowder family.

### 8.4.2 Architectural styles

In many respects the aesthetic high points of Charlestown’s built environment are vernacular: the varied silhouettes of the former cellars, warehouses and limekilns, the emphatic perpendicular of the Lovering clay-dry chimney, the solid mass of the harbour walls and the octagonal harbormaster’s hut; the visual homogeneity of the local killas and granite contrasting with white and colour-washed cottages, wooden plank doors and ironwork all linked by a varied floorscape of granite paviours and cobblestones. All these elements define the essential character of this attractive historic settlement. However, scattered throughout the village (often on the higher status buildings) are references to the more polite architectural canon which add gravitas and contrast to the lively vernacular scene.

The influence of Georgian **Neoclassical** architecture has already been noted in the symmetrical window arrangements found on so many of the domestic buildings. Many houses have centrally positioned doorways and hipped roofs also influenced by the Neoclassical style. The inclusion of Classical niches above the doorways of some double fronted cottages such as 12-17 Quay Road and 67 Charlestown Road adds to the symmetry of the façade without the expense of an additional window.
Although it does not display any applied decoration the proportions of the **Pier House Hotel** and its symmetry are Neoclassical. More overt examples of the style include the **Wesleyan Chapel** with its pedimented façade, semi-circular headed windows and open Doric porch. The theme is echoed in the adjacent **Rashleigh Arms Hotel**, which has a Classical style doorcase with pilasters supporting an entablature on its street façade and an open porch with pillars on its southern elevation. **No. 6 Charlestown Road**, the sometime coastguards station, displays Classical detailing including the rusticated quoins and flat roofed corniced porch with open ironwork piers. The Victorian shopfront on **79 Charlestown Road** and the faithful reproduction shopfront on **45 Charlestown Road** include Classical features such as cornices, console brackets and pilasters.
In contrast **St Paul’s church** was designed by Christopher Eales (architect of St Austell Market House and Truro City Hall) in the **Early English Gothic** style with lancet windows and a three stage tower.

### 8.4.3 Key buildings

These buildings are of particular importance due to their prominent positions and the role they play in the surrounding townscape.

- **Harbour piers and quays including inner basin** – Grade II*, 1790s
- **Charlestown Wesleyan Chapel** – Grade II*, 1827, interior and windows c. 1900
- **St Paul’s church** – Grade II, 1851
- **The Pier House Hotel** – Grade II, 1792
- **The Rashleigh Arms** – Grade II, early 19th century
- **Coastguard Station** – Grade II, early 19th century
- **Chimney and Lovering Clay Dry remains** – 1907/08
- **Other Listed structures (all Grade II):**
  - Late 18th century cottages – 2-9 Quay Road, 93, 95, 97, 99 Charlestown Road, 1 Church Road
  - Late 18th century houses – 51-65 (odd) Charlestown Road
  - Late 18th century farmstead – Polmear Farm, 32 Quay Road
  - Late 18th century house (possibly inn) – 21 Charlestown Road
  - Early 19th century granary – Charlestown Road
  - Early 19th former barn and stables – 111, 113 Charlestown Road
  - Early 19th century cottages – 38-39 Duporth Road, 62-82 (even) Charlestown Road
  - Early 19th century gun shed, carpenters’ shop and limekilns – Charlestown Road
  - Early 19th century houses – 67, 69, 103, 105, 109 Charlestown Road
  - Early 19th century shop premises – 45 Charlestown Road
  - Mid 19th century houses – 10, 25 Quay Road
  - Mid 19th century cottages – 73-85 (odd) Charlestown Road
  - Mid 19th century terrace – 12-17 Quay Road

### 8.4.4 Local and traditional building materials

Charlestown is predominantly a stone built settlement. **Killas** rubble is the most common building material, often concealed behind stucco or a painted surface finish. This catch-all term includes stones ranging in consistency from a soft, sandy, honey coloured stone, used in squared...
pieces, to a hard, dark grey slate stone that splits into long thin pieces and seems to be used in the earliest surviving buildings, such as the footings of the fish cellar at 1 Quay Street. It is likely that the killas stone used in the earliest building pre-dating the harbour come from a different quarry.

**Granite** and **Pentewan stone** are used as ashlar or dressed stone in high status buildings and as dressings in rubble-built structures. Pentewan stone was used for the ashlar front façade to Charlestown Chapel. Those parts of the harbour which extend above the excavated bedrock are mainly of granite construction from the Carn Grey quarries, whilst the east sea wall is of Devonian limestone. Granite rubble is also seen in some of the nineteenth century cottages. The quoins, window tracery, doorways and the internal arcade piers of St Paul’s church are constructed from granite from a quarry between Stenalees and Hensbarrow and feature a distinctive occasional turquoise fleck. **Red brick** is also used extensively for dressings in rubble structures and is incorporated into the façades of the Granary and Polmear Farmhouse. Some of the smaller cottages and industrial structures have timber lintels.
Higher quality materials are often used for front elevations with cheaper materials for side and rear elevations; for example the Pentewan ashlar façade of the Methodist Chapel and the rubble side elevations with Pentewan stone dressings.

**Mixed rubble and cob** construction is a common building type of the earliest surviving buildings, for example 21 and 91-109 Charlestown Road. Ground floors are of irregular rubble with upper floors of cob bulging over the lower masonry. These mixed construction houses are generally white or colourwashed and the distinctive qualities of the material – the sense of mass, thickness of walls, depth of window reveals, softness of the rounded corners and texture of the uneven surface finish all contribute to the character of the streetscape. Further examples may currently be concealed behind more regular renders.
The use of brick is relatively limited considering the easy access the port gave for imported materials. This may reflect the limited amount of development that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when brick may have been the affordable material of choice. Red brick dressings and chimneystacks to rubble built houses are common. More extensive use is seen in the large granary structure with other brick structures disguised by their painted finish, such as 35 Quay Road a double-fronted brick cottage laid in Flemish bond. Mixed construction structures of painted brick and rubble are also present.

Surface finishes include exposed masonry, painted or colourwashed rubble and brick and stucco. Stucco finishes are generally plain and smoothly applied, colour-washed in neutral and pastel shades and are a defining feature of the village. There is also a small amount of slate hanging such as the full slate hung elevations of 23 & 24 Quay Road and the half hung elevation of 82 Charlestown Road.

There is a good survival of historic roofs. Charlestown lies in a boundary area between two important roofing traditions and good examples of both rag slate and scantle slate roofs survive. There are also some dry slate roofs of uniform sized slate that characterise the later period of natural slate roofing. Delabole slate is common, with terracotta ridge tiles.

8.4.5 Local details

Reference has already been made to the polite architectural detailing which lends a sense of decorum and grace to the built environment of Charlestown. However, the industrial nature of the majority of the settlement’s buildings has produced its own vocabulary of robust, functional detailing, which in turn adds a strong sense of authenticity and integrity to the townscape.

Industrial -

Large doorways to ground floor levels, loading doors to upper floors, irregularly placed window openings, plank doors and cast iron fixtures and fittings all add richness and interest to the townscape and are important surviving elements of the industrial character of the settlement.
variety of different forms. Some are notably tall, such as those on nos. 55-65 (odd) Charlestown Road, added to the one storey extensions when the back-to-back housing was demolished. Many chimneys include decorative bands around the crown and tall ceramic pots. Many of the roofs have terracotta ridges, most of which are plain, but some of the larger, later houses have decorative crested ridge tiles. Some of the later buildings have terracotta hips, but a significant number have mitred hips formed from slate skilfully cut to achieve a watertight edge resulting in a less heavy appearance which accentuates both the visual flow and beauty of the slate. Dormers and rooflights are not a common feature in the village.

Windows and doors -

Charlestown’s unusual history of ownership has resulted in a high survival of historic windows and doors. Sash window fittings are common throughout the settlement. Early and small cottages have small window openings of almost square proportions, with later and larger dwellings having larger, more vertically rectangular sashes taking up more of the surface area of the building façades. Upper storey windows of many of the cottages are set directly under the eaves in the Cornish vernacular tradition. Many have their original six over six pane windows, but a number have later four pane sashes. Some of the glazing bars are arranged with narrower panes to the sides almost giving the effect of margin glass. A few of the later villas such as 60 and 179 Charlestown Road have canted bay windows. There are only a few historic dormers in the village and no historic rooflights.
Distinctive window bar arrangements can be found on a number of sash windows.

Windowsills are common and are generally of painted stone or slate.

Many of the industrial and former working buildings retain their original doors of simple braced plank construction. Domestic door types include solid panel doors with simple oblong lights above and half glazed panel doors. There are also a number of houses at 12-17 Quay Road with fielded panelled doors of a type generally common in the eighteenth century, but here dating from the mid nineteenth century.
Porches –

Porches are a distinctive local detail of the village. Gabled timber storm porches are a unifying feature of the exposed properties around the harbour and close to the sea. The shiplap gabled porches of Quay Road with their decorative bargeboards are a particular feature of the iconic harbour views. Inland properties have more architecturally elaborate arrangements including a group of more ornate flat roofed porches supported on delicate wrought iron columns. This distinctive pattern is found on a number of properties throughout the village and was probably manufactured locally, perhaps at the foundry or smithy. Others feature stone and timber columns and pilasters, such as the Doric columns of the Rashleigh Arms’ doorway and the flat porch hood with framing pilasters at 10 Quay Road.

Wrought iron columns supporting porch canopies are distinctive to the village and were probably manufactured in the village.

Shopfronts

As mentioned above Charlestown has a number of historic shop fronts of interest. An early 19th century pilastered and transomed shop front survives at 45 Charlestown Road with moulded entablature and fascia. Hanging signs are a distinctive feature of the commercial enterprises, some with ornate brackets and painted wooden panels.

Rainwater goods

Other distinctive local details include a high number of cast iron ogee-section gutters many with lion heads embellishing their junctions. This standard fitting reflects the long-term estate ownership of the village.
**Streetscape**

**Streets**

Charlestown Road although constructed as a wide industrial route to the harbour now has more the character of a boulevard due to its combination of wide carriageway and tree-lined pavements, particularly at its northern end. The planned nature of the route is still very evident in its straight course and radiating subsidiary roads and tracks. The road has a good sense of enclosure with the streetline defined by buildings, hedges, trees or garden walls. The area in front of 89-109 Charlestown Road has a slightly unresolved quality with the line of earlier buildings set back from the street. This is mitigated to a degree by the front gardens of nos. 95, 97 and 107 and a row of trees.

The wide, former industrial route of Charlestown Road now has a leafy, peaceful character.

The overall character of Church Road is that of a leafy suburban street. Although there are two rows of workers’ housing they are set within sizeable plots of land with gardens to the front and back, and the remaining housing takes the form of detached houses set within their own grounds. The southern side of the road is dominated by the church and churchyard, which presents a very open aspect. The 1880 Ordnance Survey map shows a significant border of trees between the churchyard and the street, but now only a low grass bank separates the two.

Duporth Road has a very rural feel with green slopes on either side and tall trees which meet overhead giving a strong sense of enclosure. The streetscape opens out in front of nos. 31-39 where the building line is set back behind long front gardens.

Some of the unadopted side roads and tracks leading off Charlestown Road have an informal unmade character that closely integrates the village with its countryside setting.
8.4.6 Public realm

The high survival level of incidental details is one of the defining features of Charlestown. Distinctive historic public realm features are part of this high level of completeness.

Boundaries

Boundary treatments are important features of the built environment. The majority are constructed from mortared killas and help define the streetline whilst at the same time contributing to the sense of visual homogeneity. Rubble boundary walls enclose front gardens, former industrial yards and former ore floors. A few domestic walls are constructed from granite blocks and many houses have granite gate piers, some with shaped caps and decorative detailing such as those to 179 Charlestown Road. As described earlier, the quays and piers of the harbour are predominantly constructed from granite and its grey and sandy tones define the area. Other boundary treatments take the form of Cornish hedges with masonry-retained banks topped with vegetation and interspersed with trees, such as at nos. 72-82 and 60 Charlestown Road and bordering some of the fields.
Another feature of the settlement is the use of cast iron railings, reflecting the presence of the local foundry. The railings at the head of the harbour on the west side and on the east side adjacent to the lower part of Quay Road are of an unusual design consisting of iron pintails leaded into split granite posts. Cast iron posts and rails border the leat as it follows the course of the northern side of Duporth Road. In addition to the railings there are a number of distinctive, simple but decorative, wrought iron gates seen throughout the village that are likely to have been locally made.
Wrought iron gates, most probably manufactured at the local foundry, can be found throughout the village.

The colourful cobbled surface of the former ore floor, now the Rashleigh Arms car park, was constructed from ballast.

The majority of pavements are simple tarmac bordered with slim granite kerbs. Along the southern side of Charlestown Road in front of nos. 45-63 and bending around the corner into Duporth Road the pavement has wide granite kerbs adjacent to cobbled gutters.

Paving and steps

The historic cobbled surfaces of the ore floors and yards are important survivals and add to the rich textures of the conservation area. The cobbled surface of the Rashleigh Arms car park is a particularly fine example: the variety of colour and texture of the cobbles breaking up the large expanse of space. These surfaces have been used to inspire recent surface treatments with cobbled gutters and strips used to control traffic and define private areas, such as at Barkhouse Lane and Eleven Doors.
Wide granite kerbs and gutters along Charlestown Road

The harbour and quayside areas are all paved in square slabs of granite and granite blocks. Other areas of granite paving still survive such as to the immediate west of the weighbridge platform where there are squared blocks, similar to those used on the quaysides of the inner harbour. Flights of granite steps and ramps lead from the quayside to the water.

Granite block paving in front of the weighbridge

Granite is used throughout the settlement for steps and plinths where there are changes in the gradient. Pier House sits above Charlestown Road on a granite block plinth with a flight of wide granite steps leading to the entrance. In front of the former count house and estate office on Charlestown Road the pavement rises above the road and is fronted by granite blocks. A plinth of wide granite steps leads to the former post office at 79 Charlestown Road.
Harbour ephemera

- Bollards around the edge of the quay in the inner basin are formed from re-used sections of iron rising mains from the former mines or clayworks.
- Granite and wooden bollards remain along the western wall of the outer harbour.
- Ropes, crates and lobster pots relate to the harbour’s continued use.

Other ephemera

- Four cast iron capstans, originally used to manoeuvre ships into the harbour - resited within the pub garden of the Rashleigh Arms.
- Large cast iron anchor in the south eastern corner of the main car park.
- Historic letter boxes - Victorian example set into the wall of the smithy at 165 Charlestown Road, George VI letterbox set into 5 Quay Road.
- Distinctive dressed granite niches - originally held water supply outlets. Seen throughout the village including Duporth Road and Quay Road.
Granite niches built to house water outlets can be found throughout the village

8.4.7 Greenscape

The close connection between the village and its surrounding countryside setting is very important to the character of the Conservation Area. Views to the surrounding green fields and woodland ensure that Charlestown retains the sense of a discrete settlement, separate and different from the nearby St Austell, Duporth and Carlyon Bay.

The green fields with their low hedge boundaries and areas of woodland tightly contain the built environment, in places running right into the settlement abutting Charlestown Road. Remains of mine workings are visible in the surrounding area with choked shafts, tip dumps and other earthworks and waste surviving.

Mature trees are very significant within and surrounding the village. Large trees including beech, ash and oak line Charlestown Road and deciduous woodland forms a green
backdrop to some parts of the village. The eastern horizon is capped by a copse of Scott’s Pines at Carlyon Bay that make a distinctive silhouette against the skyline.

The reservoir ponds and leat of the harbour flushing system form an important and unique feature in the landscape and are set within deciduous woodland. There is currently no public right of way to the ponds.

Garden planting is an important feature of the village, particularly with the long front gardens of some of the cottage rows. Back gardens are largely concealed from the roadside by the continuous build lines of the cottages. The detached garden plots on Duporth Road have been abandoned and are currently overgrown with brambles.

The recreation ground, formerly one of the ore floors, provides an informal green open area for the community. It includes a play area and football goalposts.

The churchyard forms another significant green space with a number of interesting monuments and typical churchyard planting of yews, evergreen shrubs and deciduous trees.

The south-eastern corner of the churchyard has a considerable collection of trees which in turn border a further wooded area to the east and the rope walk which is itself defined by a row of mature trees.
8.4.8 Activity

The variety of historic and current uses and activities contribute greatly to the character of Charlestown. Historically there were numerous trades and activities represented in the village: mariners, shipbuilding, merchants, carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, tailors, rope makers, fishermen, foundrymen, miners, milliners, shoe makers and farmers.

The harbour remains the focus of the settlement, but the village is no longer defined by its maritime trade and its associated industries. A fleet of historic ships including a number of square riggers operates from the harbour and Charlestown retains a small fishing fleet presence. The settlement is surrounded by agricultural land. The village is popular for tourism and leisure uses, such as gig rowing and hosts an annual regatta. It is located on the coastal footpath and is popular with walkers. The village is supported by several restaurants, cafes, public houses, a hotel, guest houses, offices, gift shops, galleries, the church and hall, the recreation ground and the Shipwreck and Heritage Centre. All of which add vibrancy and provide facilities for visitors and the local community.

8.5 Loss and intrusion

Charlestown’s unusual history in terms of its industrial development combined with long-held private ownership has resulted in an exceptional historic environment whose importance and completeness set it apart from the majority of other industrial settlements in the county. This uniqueness and the perceived threat of overdevelopment in the late 1990s prompted the Local Authority, Restormel District Council (RDC), and English Heritage to jointly commission an historical and archaeological survey of the settlement in 1998 produced by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU). The aim of this survey was to define and explain the historic character of Charlestown in terms of its surviving buildings and sites and to provide a resource against which to assess future development of Charlestown.

Following on from the survey RDC designated an Article 4(2) Direction in 2002 bringing a greater degree of control over changes to the unlisted buildings in the conservation area (details in Appendix 1). This Direction coupled with the large number of Listed buildings within the Conservation Area, which are subject to Listed building consent, has helped maintain Charlestown’s historic integrity. However, some insensitive change and loss had occurred historically, and more recently before the tightening of conservation control.

8.5.1 Loss

Historic

The CAU survey produced a gazetteer of all the sites and buildings identified during the project from historic sources, maps and fieldwork. Looking down the list the vast majority of entries are recorded as extant. However, there were some losses including –

- various outhouses and small buildings
- elements of Polmear Farm including outhouses, a barn and a mowhay
- some of the features of the working harbour
- several copper ore floors
- a smithy on Quay Road
- a cooperage and sawpit on Charlestown Road
The major loss in recent years was the demolition of a row of four houses on Charlestown Road, built between the 1825 survey and the 1842 tithe map and Listed Grade II, and their replacement with a row of four modern buildings. Other losses include front garden walls removed to provide off road parking, original doors and windows replaced with inappropriate modern designs, some loss of original cast iron rainwater goods, the trees which bordered the churchyard along its northern boundary and the trees which defined the streetline in front of nos. 99 and 103 Charlestown Road.

### 8.5.2 Intrusion

There has been some very successful new development within Charlestown that sits comfortably alongside the historic fabric. However, some infill buildings have been constructed without regard to local character whose designs include the use of non-local stone, plastic windows, and no chimneys. They are sited behind very low front walls which leave gaps in the streetscape and vast expanses of hard standing all too visible.

This new cottage at the eastern end of the early nineteenth century row respects the form, site, materials, style and detailing of its historic neighbours.

The cast iron street lanterns fixed to the walls of some of the buildings at the southern end of Charlestown Road reflect the local tradition of ironwork and their siting makes them unobtrusive. The provision of additional free standing street lights in this area has led to a slight impression of clutter and a level of over-illumination which gives the impression of an urban environment inappropriate to the location. Similarly the utilitarian street lights along the northern end of Charlestown Road are overscale and more suited to a bypass than a sensitive historic location.
In some areas of the settlement the overhead cables are very visible and not always sited with reference to the surrounding historic fabric.

Signage clutter can detract from the surrounding historic fabric

In some cases there is an over provision of street signage and it is not always sited with reference to the surrounding historic fabric.

The modern telephone box outside the Rashleigh Arms car park is visually dominant and strikes a discordant modern note in its sensitive historic setting.

8.5.3 Neutral areas

In addition to the missing trees there is a wide expanse of tarmac in front of nos. 91-109 Charlestown Road. Whilst the open nature of this area reflects its historic character, the uniformity of material with the road surface is overpowering.

8.6 General condition and Buildings at Risk

The condition of the harbour, ephemera and lockgates is an ongoing issue, the structural condition of the harbour itself and particularly in the outer basin is of concern. There is a need for comprehensive remedial conservation repairs and also ongoing maintenance. To date a reactionary approach to harbour repairs has been undertaken, the asset would benefit from a conservation management plan informed by a condition survey and structural assessment.

Extensive self-sown trees and scrub vegetation has taken hold of the harbour sides to the north of the inner basin. Root action is likely to be causing further damage to the masonry.

The former gardens or allotments opposite 51-63 Charlestown Road, former allotments immediately to the south of the recreation ground and the orchard to the west
of 28 Charlestown Road are important green spaces but have become neglected.

The reduced functioning of the pond and leat flushing system is an issue, as is the condition of the sluice houses.

The condition of buildings in Charlestown is generally good. However, there are a number of significant structures that are currently in a derelict and deteriorating condition and therefore ‘At Risk’. The threat of the loss of these structures and their current underused and poor condition is a negative issue affecting the special character of the Conservation Area.

The Grade II* Listed Charlestown Chapel and attached Sunday School is currently on the English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register. The chapel roof has been repaired, but the overall condition of the buildings remains poor.

The distinctive clay dry structure, with its landmark chimneystack, has been fire damaged with roof removed and in a semi-derelict and underused condition for a number of years.
9 Problems and Pressures

Charlestown’s combination of attractive natural setting, good quality historic houses with many surviving original features and an historic working harbour attracts a great deal of interest from those who would like to live and work in the village. The challenge for Charlestown is to manage future change in such a way that it maintains its vibrant, busy character without sacrificing its unique and sensitive historic environment.

Challenges facing the settlement include –

Development

- Extensive redevelopment proposals for the village, harbour and the surrounding landscape. Since the sale of the estate in 1986 a number of significant proposals have been mooted including developing the surrounding fields, which at present maintain the settlement’s discrete character.

- Changes in the harbour economy and Charlestown’s relative prosperity could threaten its authentic character as a working coastal port and industrial settlement. There is significant development pressure to convert industrial structures and employment space to residential uses.

Buildings

- The completeness and high levels of survival make incremental loss of traditional architectural features due to inappropriate alterations all the more damaging.

- ‘Anywhere’ recent development that fails to respect and enhance the special character of the conservation area.

- The structural condition of the harbour including associated ephemera such as the clay shute and the requirements of its long-term structural maintenance and upkeep.

- The structural condition and under use of a number of significant structures that are currently in a derelict and deteriorating condition and therefore ‘at risk’ – the clay dry and the Grade II* Listed Charlestown Chapel which is on the national English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register.

Public Realm

- The lack of a coordinated positive tree management strategy and the over maturity of a number of trees which may result in a loss of significant tree cover and the eroding of this important element of Charlestown’s character.

- Uncoordinated public realm elements detract from the quality of the historic environment.

- The reservoir ponds, leat system and surrounding countryside could be more accessible, and their role in the surrounding villagescape better understood.

- The vulnerability of the surviving open yards and ore floors to development and resurfacing.
At present there is no public access to the lower and higher ponds

Designations

- The Conservation Area boundary currently excludes important elements of the settlement’s historic development: the late eighteenth century ropewalk, the former Sunday School on Church Road, the site of the Charlestown Battery at Crinnis Head, the former foundry site and the historic industrial development around the Grove.

Environmental

- The problems of coastal erosion leading to cliff retreat is significant and is likely to cause problems for the South West Coastal Path and those buildings sited most closely to the cliff edge.
- The challenges of responding to climate change in terms of flooding, increased storminess and the need for renewable energy and efficient buildings.
10 Opportunities

- Charlestown has a unique history which at present is difficult to read. The CAU report highlighted the fact that the major industries of Cornwall – fishing, mining, farming, engineering and china clay are all represented within this small village. In addition, the village has interesting stories to tell about its ownership and more recent role in show business. A village trail with interpretation panels could help visitors better understand the surviving historic fabric and the route could include links to the wider natural setting. The possibility of reinstating public access to the currently privately owned ponds through a leat trail could be investigated along with access to the rope walk, as originally identified by Policy SA40 of the Restormel Local Plan.

- Some elements of the public realm such as the use of cobbles and granite setts to define entrances, private areas and to control traffic and the cast iron lanterns used to light the harbour area successfully reflect local distinctiveness. However, there are some elements of the streetscape which do not reflect the high quality of the surrounding historic environment. Charlestown would benefit from a coordinated scheme which addressed the problem of signage clutter and low grade street furniture. There could be a real opportunity to produce street furniture which reflects the cast-iron tradition of the village along with the use of other local, natural materials. Existing examples of locally distinctive street furniture such as the granite and cast iron railings should be maintained and repaired where necessary. There are a number of memorial seats in the village which are of great importance to the families and friends who have bequeathed them.

The possibility could be explored for agreeing a future design for these benches onto which the plaques could be transferred when the existing benches need to be replaced.
A future strategy could be considered for co-ordinating the design of benches

- The former pattern store on the Foundry site is proposed to be repaired and converted for a new community hall.

- At present there are a number of open areas of green space within the heart of the village which are uncared for and overgrown. These sites were all significant open spaces in historic Charlestown and include: the late eighteenth century gardens to the back-to-backs along Charlestown Road which still include examples of stone privies now in a bad state of repair, a retaining granite wall with granite gate posts and a granite framed water point; a former early nineteenth century china stone yard immediately to the south of the playing field now a small field and an area recorded as three gardens to the rear of 33-35 Quay Street on the 1825 map which by the drawing of the Ordnance Survey in 1880 had become one large enclosed garden. In Charlestown the open spaces are an intrinsic part of the village’s history and character and should be valued and properly maintained. There is an opportunity to revive overgrown orchards and former allotments.

- There is an opportunity to formulate local group/forum or ‘friends’ group to raise awareness and champion conservation issues. This group could deliver some of the community focused recommendations such as the village trail or a signage and street furniture audit.
Sources

Published sources

Bray, P, 1994. Around and about Charlestown “A glimpse into yesteryear”, Corran Publications, St Austell

Cornwall Archaeological Unit, 1998. Charlestown. Historical and archaeological assessment, Cornwall County Council

Larn R and B, 1994. Charlestown, Tor Mark Press, Penryn
Pearse R, 1963. The ports and harbours of Cornwall, HE Warne Ltd, St Austell


Strategic, policy and programme documents


Cornwall County Council, 2004. Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape. Nomination Document


English Heritage, February 2006 (a). Guidance on conservation area appraisals

English Heritage, February 2006 (b). Guidance on the management of conservation areas


Restormel Borough Council. Local Plan 2001-2011


Map sources

Survey of Charlestown Estate by Richard Thomas of Falmouth, 1825 (held at RIC, Truro)

Tithe map of St Austell parish, 1842 – Cornwall Record Office TM 8/1 and TM 8/3

First edition 1:25000 Ordnance Survey map 1882

Second edition 1:25000 Ordnance Survey map 1907

1936 revision 1:25000 Ordnance Survey map
Internet sources

Access to Archives –
http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/

Cornish Mining World Heritage Site –
http://www.cornish-mining.org.uk/

English Heritage, Images of England – site with information on Listed buildings -
http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/

Other sources

Cornwall Council’s Historic Environment Record including the Sites and Monuments Record, Historic maps, aerial photographs, Historic Landscape Characterisation –
Appendix 1: Charlestown Conservation Area – Article 4(2) Direction

In 2002 Restormel Borough Council made a Direction under the Article 4(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1999. The effect of the Order is that, within the Charlestown Conservation Area, development described below requires planning permission. This gives the Council a greater degree of control over change within the conservation area.

- The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse, where any part of the enlargement, improvement or alteration could front a highway or an open space. [This includes the replacement of doors and windows].
- The alteration to a roof slope of a dwellinghouse which fronts a highway or an open space.
- The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse, where the external door in question fronts a highway or an open space.
- The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure, swimming or other pool, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure, where the building or enclosure, swimming or other pool to be provided would front a highway or open space, or where the part of the building or enclosure maintained, improved or altered would front a highway or open space.
- The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of a hard surface, where it would front a highway or open space.
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, where the part of the building or other structure on which the satellite antenna is to be installed, altered or replaced fronts a highway or an open space.
- The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney on a dwellinghouse or on a building within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.
- The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse and fronting a highway or open space.
- The painting of the exterior of any stone, slate or rendered surface which fronts a highway or an open space of a dwellinghouse; or any building or enclosure within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, other than such a surface which at the date of the Direction is already painted.
- Any building operation consisting of the demolition of the whole or any part of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure fronting a highway or an open space.
**Charlestown Conservation Area Management Plan**

**Introduction**

This Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) is intended to stand alongside the Character Appraisal. There is general guidance on the conservation and enhancement of the key elements that contribute to the quality of the townscape. At the end of each section is a list of best practice bullet points to aid retention of historic character and architectural quality.

It is hoped that the document will act as a reference for all who make decisions which may impact on the special character of Charlestown – property owners, planners, developers, designers, the local authority and statutory undertakers. To this end it will be available via the internet and in print form through the library, Parish Council, etc.

Special character is derived from the overall effect of many components and is dependent for its survival on a great number of individuals making informed choices about the management of their own piece of the jigsaw. Some control is applied by the Local Planning Authority through the Article 4(2) direction – which brings certain types of permitted development under Council jurisdiction.

It is of fundamental importance that owners and contractors recognise that their actions can and do have a significant impact on the quality of Charlestown. Good decisions and sympathetic works take more thought and often cost more; but the rewards are great and will be appreciated in decades to come by future generations.

**Article 4(2) direction**

In 2002, to protect the many dwelling houses in the Charlestown Conservation Area, the Council served an Article 4(2) Direction bringing under planning control a number of alterations which would normally be ‘permitted development’. This was done to ensure that the historic and architectural merit of such buildings was not adversely affected by the use of modern materials, inappropriate details, and badly designed extensions. The works now requiring planning permission are listed in Appendix 1 of the Conservation Area Appraisal.

To date the Direction has had some success in controlling unsympathetic change. However, a number of inappropriate windows, modern off-the-shelf front doors and replacement slate roofs exist from before the serving of the Direction and some boundary walls have been lost.

The former foundry site currently lies outside the conservation area boundary
Recommendations

Development

- Development of the surrounding green fields will weaken Charlestown’s identity as a significant historic place distinct from the neighbouring settlements of St Austell, Duporth and Carlyon Bay.

- The commercial use of the harbour and the light industries operating from the village are an important part of its character and should be supported and encouraged. Pressure to convert industrial structures and employment spaces to residential use should be resisted.

Buildings

- Great efforts should be made to uphold the Article 4(2) Direction to ensure that good conservation practice such as the retention of historic features or their like-for-like replacement is upheld. The diminution of character caused by the loss of original doors, windows, roofs, etc. is always greater than the sum of the individual parts and this is especially true in an historic setting as sensitive as Charlestown.

- Any new buildings should be sited with reference to their surroundings and to reflect the existing historic street patterns. They should be of design, materials, scale and detailing appropriate to Charlestown’s historic character and in accordance with the Building on Context Guidance by English Heritage and CABE and the Cornwall Design Guide.

Due to the Article 4(2) there is a good survival of historic windows and doors on unlisted buildings throughout Charlestown

The design of these new houses along Barkhouse Lane demonstrate a knowledge of the local building traditions
• Appropriate repairs to the harbour should be carried out including the removal of extensive self-sown trees and scrub vegetation from the harbour sides to the north of the inner basin as root growth is likely to cause further damage to the masonry.

• The continuing deterioration of the historic fabric of the chapel, Sunday School and china clay dry needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. In addition to the necessary repairs, new sympathetic uses need to be found for these significant historic buildings to ensure their continued maintenance in the future.

Public Realm

• Trees within the Conservation Area boundary are already afforded a degree of protection, but in some cases a greater degree of control in the form of Tree Preservation Orders is required. These should form part of a wider strategy to address general management and health and safety issues. This strategy should include the wider woodland setting of the Conservation Area and the replanting of indigenous fruit trees in the village orchards.

• Street furniture should be reduced to a minimum by good design. Signs, traffic signals and lighting should, where possible, be located on existing furniture and buildings. New designs should be simple, appropriate to their context and co-ordinated in terms of style, colour and siting.

• The possibility of links to the reservoir ponds, leat system and surrounding countryside from within the settlement should be explored, and the conservation of the leats and ponds both in terms of the natural and the historic environment should be encouraged.

• The surviving open yards and ore floors are an important part of the distinctive character of Charlestown and all further applications for their development should be resisted. Where the original surfacing survives this should be retained and where the surface has been lost to tarmac consideration should be given to replacement in the future with a surfacing appropriate to the surroundings, which respects local traditions.
• Consideration should be given to relocating the modern telephone box to a less obtrusive site or replacing the existing structure with an historic telephone kiosk or a new structure in a simple and unobtrusive design.

Designations

• Extend the Conservation Area boundary to include the following:

The ropewalk - this 360 metre long and 4 metre wide straight and level track was used for spinning and twisting ropes during their manufacture. It is historically connected to the harbour where the ropes were used for shipping and although 45 ropewalks have been recorded in the county this is one of the most complete survivals.

The Sunday School - first recorded (as such) in 1907 was previously the Reading Room and was constructed in 1869. In addition to its importance as a historic place of learning, this building represents part of a movement by the established church in the late nineteenth century to regain some of the ground lost to Nonconformity in the industrial settlements. It is a simple, charming building combining a vernacular split level design built into the slope of the churchyard with a strong gable end echoing the east end of the church. The original twelve and nine pane sash windows still survive as does the sized slate roof with crested ridge tiles.
The design of the Sunday School makes reference to the east end of the adjacent church.

Charlestown Battery at Crinnis Head - Charlestown was the only mineral port in Cornwall specifically built with its own defence and it is the only place where both elements still survive. The battery is roughly semi-circular and has a rear wall constructed from rubble masonry with granite capstones. Within the enclosure are the foundations of military structures. The rear wall and crenellations, which are insubstantial and serve no defensive purpose, were probably constructed for decorative purposes designed to be viewed from the Rashleigh estate at Duporth. The Charlestown Battery is owned and managed by the Atalaya Family Trust.

The former foundry site - first established in 1827 the foundry was until recently a key element in the industrial life of Charlestown. The foundry supplied, in addition to its industrial output, much of the street furniture for the village including signs, railings, gates and the distinctive porch supports, which remain such a feature of Charlestown contributing considerably to its unique character. Although the site has recently been redeveloped for housing elements of the former industrial complex still remain including a waterwheel, the façade of one of the former warehouses, parts of the south-western boundary wall and the yet-to-be-converted former pattern store.

The waterwheel from the former foundry remains in situ and has been incorporated into the new development.
The south-western boundary wall of the former foundry site still survives

The Grove area – this complex of buildings includes surviving elements from each phase of the development of industrial Charlestown including the former walls, entrance gate and some of the outbuildings of the 1796 smelting works; the corn mill and leat shown on the 1825 map; the Grove, the mid-to-late nineteenth century family home of the Crowders and a late nineteenth century house and garden built to the west of the site. The surrounding fields include the possible former route of the original road into Charlestown, parts of the Charlestown leat system and a Bronze Age barrow which lies to the north of the Grove driveway.

All these areas form part of the development of Charlestown and are important for their evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value. Their current exclusion from the Conservation Area is therefore considered to be anomalous.
General Guidance

This guidance must be considered in conjunction with the forthcoming Cornwall Design Guide.

Archaeology

The history and nature of Charlestown means that there is archaeological potential virtually everywhere. Particularly sensitive areas include the areas of the villages first developed around the harbour and the early farm sites. Any works that involve excavation may reveal interesting finds. Where work is subject to the planning process it will be considered within the context of the NPPF and may be subject to pre-application archaeological assessment and/or relevant conditions.

If work is being carried out by private owners they should be alert to pieces of artefacts, wall footings and changes in the colour of the earth. If such finds are made they should contact the Council for advice. Significant finds ought to be recorded to add to our understanding of historic Charlestown.

Statutory undertakers carrying out trench work ought to seek advice before starting and agree a watching brief where appropriate – for example if cable undergrounding is carried out.

Where there are conditions attached to any Planning, Listed building or Conservation Area approval or any other relevant approval requiring archaeological investigation and recording then this work shall be funded by the applicant as it is not supplied by the local planning authority or County Council. Similarly outside the planning system any investigation will require funding.

Roofs

The topography and development pattern of Charlestown is such that the roofscape is of importance to the overall character of the place. Roofscape character is based on the quality and patina of the materials; the form, pitch and orientation of the roofs themselves. Sometimes there is order but most of the attractive roofs are jumbled and dynamic – changing depending on the vantage point.

Chimneys punctuate the roofscape and other quality details, in the form of rainwater goods, etc., add richness on closer inspection.

Slate

Slate is the prevailing roofing material and a good deal of locally sourced historic roofing slate is in evidence. There are fine examples of rag slate roofs and others using smaller slates but also in random widths and diminishing courses.

Today there are a much wider variety of products available. Artificial slates should always be avoided as they inevitably cause serious harm to the quality of the roofscape. With natural slate being imported from Spain, South America and China, great care is needed when specifying real slate. Some of these are suitable replacements on non-prominent buildings or new-build, but they are never a satisfactory replacement for historic slate roofing. New slate ought to be fixed using nails – clips are usually specified to compensate for poor slate that splits when holed as using a correct lap will prevent windlift.

Owners of buildings with rag slate must be aware that the slate will actually have a lot of life left in it but may be suffering from nail rot. Opportunistic contractors will often offer such owners an amazingly cheap price to re-roof in
artificial or imported slate, knowing that the rag or random slate they reclaim can be sold on or re-used on much more lucrative work elsewhere.

**Chimneys**

Loss of chimneys is nearly always detrimental to the character of the roofscape. It is seldom necessary and ought to be resisted. Repair or reconstruction must be the first aim unless there are extenuating circumstances such as serious structural concerns.

Alterations can rob chimneys of their distinctive character by the application of smooth, crisp render that hides stonework, flattens a pleasingly uneven substrate or covers decorative brickwork. Removal of drip slates and historic pots also detracts from the area.

**Rainwater goods**

Most of the historic rainwater goods in the town are cast iron and there is a notable survival of cast iron ogee-section gutters many with lion heads embellishing their junctions which add to the appearance of individual buildings and collectively enrich whole street scenes. With proper maintenance these items can offer good service for well over one hundred years. When replacement is needed there are plenty of suppliers of historic profiles - many are available factory finished and some in cast aluminium. Plastic is an inferior product which will not last as well or look as good – especially if it has a modern box profile. It doesn’t take paint well but unpainted it soon develops a coating of algae. Like other plastic building products, when it is replaced it has to go to landfill where it will not break down for centuries, so the environmental costs deserve consideration.

**Ridges, hips, eaves and verges**

Traditional ways of edging roofs are easily lost when roofing work is undertaken. Clay ridge tiles may be replaced by concrete, mitred slate or mortar fillet hips covered by tiles, box soffits replace open eaves or moulded fascias and slated or mortared verges can be lost to boards. All of these apparently slight changes have a cumulative impact that is far greater than each individual act would suggest.

Many of the hipped roofs in Charlestown have mitred edges and this finish should be replicated when roofing work takes place.

Lead details such as hips ought to be retained and where lead flashings have never existed they should only be added if that can be executed with subtlety. All new leadwork must be treated with patination oil to prevent oxidisation and leaching.

**Dormers and rooflights**

In order to preserve Charlestown’s roofscape, the insertion of dormer windows should be avoided as their historic use in Charlestown is very limited.

Rooflights can allow the use of valuable roofspace and there are good modern interpretations of low profile metal units available. Where they can be inserted with little impact to townscape views, especially on screened or rear roof slopes, this is acceptable. The smallest unit needed should be used and it ought to be a quality metal unit with a slender frame. In groups or terraces neighbours should try to use rooflights that are complementary in their size, type and location.
Solar Panels

Whilst the Council clearly would wish to promote sound, sustainable energy systems, the choice of such systems can seriously erode the historic integrity of Listed and unlisted buildings in conservation areas. Therefore careful consideration should be given to their positioning to avoid compromising the character of the historic environment. Very often there are alternative locations away from the historic building where solar panels can be fitted. This may indeed result in such equipment being fixed to less sensitive buildings which are part of the curtilage. Alternatively there are less obtrusive solutions available such as ground source heat pumps. Although solar panels can be reversible they can be most damaging to historic roofscapes.

Roofing: A summary

- Note and record detailing before starting works to enable reinstatement.
- If traditional details are missing look to similar buildings for inspiration.
- Repair local historic rag and random slate roofs or re-use in situ.
- Maintain or recreate authentic details to ridges, hips, eaves and verges.
- Repair chimneys and retain historic pot, drip moulds or cowl details.
- Repair or reinstate metal rainwater goods in traditional profiles.
- Avoid dormers unless there is strong justification.
- Only use rooflights and solar panels sensitively and consider impact on views.

- It is always advisable to check with the LPA as to whether permission is required for alterations.

Walls

Charlestown is located in an area of rich geological interest and as a consequence a number of different materials were available for building. Killas (slatestone) would have been quarried in and around the village whilst granite was available from the nearby St Austell quarries and Pentewan stone from quarries to the south.

Some of the domestic buildings are rendered with roughcast or smooth lime render, whilst others have stone walls of granite blocks or killas with granite or brick dressings. The majority of working and industrial buildings are of granite or slatestone construction and are unrendered.

Great care and understanding is needed in the repair of all traditional materials in order to prolong their useful life and protect them from decay. Careful appraisal of prevalent materials in a particular locality ought to inform and inspire the designers of new buildings so that contemporary additions enrich the area.

Choice of colour is a matter of taste, but it is worth remembering that plain limewash was almost ubiquitous in the past and only natural pigments were available. Bolder colours like blues and greens were beyond the reach of all but the wealthiest; consequently these colours often seem unsuitable on humbler dwellings.

Stonework

As mentioned above many buildings in Charlestown are of local stone construction. Although most of the stone used in Charlestown is durable, these walls are still vulnerable to
damage if poorly treated. All stonework must be pointed using lime mortar that flexes with the walls and allows them to breathe. Pointing should also be flush or slightly recessed, especially on wider joints, and should never project in front of the faces. A well-graded sand free of ‘soft’ (or fine clayey) particles is best for most work.

**Render**

Render covers rubble stone on a variety of buildings. Traditionally this render was always lime based and that remains the only sensible choice as cement based renders are incompatible with all of these building types.

Generally speaking the finish of render is a reflection of the status of the building and/or its function. So functional buildings, humble cottages and the rear elevations of some higher status dwellings have roughcast, bag rubbed or float finished render that follows the unevenness of the wall beneath. These renders were hand-thrown to achieve a better key and texture is derived from the coarse aggregate; modern ‘tyrolean’ type finishes take their texture from cementitious droplets and have a fundamentally different character. Grander and more aspirational buildings have smooth render, sometimes fine stucco; these renders may be lined in imitation of ashlar stonework below. Considerable skill is needed to achieve this type of finish.

The coating of lime renders with modern masonry paint will trap moisture over time and can cause failure of the render. This is often interpreted as the failure of an inferior old fashioned product, but it is in fact the result of conflicting technologies. Where possible historic renders ought to be repaired and retained, with masonry paint removed using specialist stripping products. Limewash remains by far the best and most effective surface coating on old buildings and has a lovely matt finish, but it is pointless applying it over paint. There are alternatives to traditional limewash which have similar breathable qualities and matt finish such as mineral paints which may be acceptable in some instances.

**Slate hanging**

Slate hanging does occur on several buildings in the village usually where the building is in an exposed location where penetrating damp has been a problem or on elevated side elevations of attached buildings where access is difficult and a durable, low maintenance solution was essential.

**Brickwork**

There are no historic buildings in Charlestown entirely constructed from brick. However, it was used extensively on the later buildings in the form of lintels, decorative window surrounds, quoins and chimneys, and on the façades of the Granary and Polmear Farmhouse. The use of lime mortars for repair is equally important for brickwork.

**Walls: A summary**

- Traditional finishes should be repaired whenever possible, not replaced.
- Compatible materials and finishes are essential on historic walls.
- Authentic finishes should not be removed or covered.
- Where traditional finishes have been lost, sympathetic reinstatement is desirable.
- Limewash allows old walls to breathe; masonry paint traps moisture.
**Joinery**

Authentic joinery and historic glass adds to the historic character and visual quality of any Conservation Area. The extent of survival is often indicative of the percentage of Listed buildings; but also of the value local people place on the historic fabric of their town. Like many other places Charlestown has a mix of original joinery and replacements, some sensitive but some that is poorly detailed.

At present the replacement of windows and doors in unlisted dwelling houses in the Conservation Area is controlled by the Article 4(2) direction. Unless badly neglected over a long period of time, traditional joinery is rarely beyond repair. In many cases the timber used was so well sourced and seasoned that it is far more durable than any modern alternative. Detail may have been lost by years of painting but great care needs to be taken when stripping paint though as historic paints contained lead. If repair is not possible, replica replacement is the next best thing; though replacement requires the use of primary resources and energy that makes it a less sustainable option. The use of imported hardwood from unsustainable sources ought to be avoided and PVCu has significant ecological issues in production and disposal.

There is no product that is maintenance free. Timber needs painting every few years, but each time the result looks fresh and new. After a hundred years or more sash cords or hinges may need renewal; this is quite easily done and gives the unit a new lease of life. When modern opening mechanisms or double glazed units breakdown the answer is replacement of the whole unit – hence the piles of PVCu windows accumulating at recycling centres in the absence of satisfactory means of disposal. Traditional windows can normally be upgraded in terms of energy efficiency through draught proofing without compromising their character.

**Windows**

The size, type and design of the windows in an historic building reveal much about its age or development, its use and the status of its occupants in the past. Humbler buildings often have casement windows that vary in design according to age, use and local custom. However the majority of windows in Charlestown are sash windows, which also vary in size and detail according to age and use. The enduring popularity of sash windows reflects their versatility in providing controlled ventilation.

The intrinsic value of the view through an historic window is appreciated by many sympathetic owners. They enjoy the elegance of the glazing bars and enthuse about the distortion and play of light in imperfect historic glass. With care, old glass can be salvaged and re-used; where it has been lost, modern equivalents can be sourced from specialist suppliers.

When new windows are needed there are a number of issues to consider:

- **Proportion and subdivision** – The glazing pattern of the original windows ought to be retained, (or restored if lost), as that is a critical part of the whole building. It indicates the size of glass available or affordable at the time of construction.
- **Mode of opening** – The introduction of top hung or tilt-and-turn opening lights is always visually jarring and harmful to historic character. Overlapping ‘storm-seal’ type details are an entirely modern introduction and are unnecessary if flush units are properly made. Spring loaded sashes are an inferior replacement mechanism compared with properly weighted double-hung sashes.
• Glazing – Traditional glazing bar profiles, properly jointed and glazed with putty, (or glazing compound), rather than beading, will give a genuine appearance.

• Thermal insulation – Timber double glazing for multiple pane window designs often results in the glazing bars being much too thick or slim but externally mounted and fake, which is unconvincing. Beading further detracts from the appearance if added. Alternatives such as ‘slimlite’ or ‘slenderglaze’ can achieve better aesthetic results but will rarely be an acceptable alternative for historic joinery.

• The use of shutters and/or insulated curtains/blinds can greatly reduce heat loss without the need for window replacement.

• Draught-proofing – The most significant heat loss through old windows is due to poor fitting and lack of draught-stripping. There are proprietary systems that retro-fit draught excluders and greatly reduce the amount of air changes and so heat loss.

• Sound insulation – In noisy locations people often replace windows with modern double glazed units to reduce the problem. In fact secondary glazing is more effective than double glazing and allows retention of traditional windows.

• Sills – Traditional sills should be retained unless beyond repair.

Doors
Doors are just as vulnerable to insensitive replacement as windows. The conservation principles summarized above can be applied equally to doors. Most traditional door types allow for individual expression by painting and attractive ironmongery, etc. Unfortunately many owners choose to express their individuality by replacing a serviceable vintage door with an off-the-peg unit in stained hardwood or PVCu which is damaging to historic character.

Shopfront
A few historic shopfronts have survived in Charlestown and there are a few former elements of historic shopfronts which act as a reminder of how economic activity, shopping and employment patterns have changed over the years.

Regarding the surviving historic shopfronts, every effort should be made to retain their character through the retention of historic features.

Joinery: A summary
- Historic joinery items add character and quality to the settlement and ought to be retained and repaired if at all possible.
- When replacement is necessary, this ought to be an exact replica.
- Where joinery has been lost in the past and reinstatement is desirable, look at similar properties in the vicinity for inspiration.
- Design, mode of opening and colour of finish are the most important considerations.

Enclosure
In the past enclosure was about demarcation and also keeping out passing animals. Historic enclosure is threatened with change by the desire for greater privacy – leading to the addition of timber fence panels for example. Alternatively it may be removed to provide parking. At present the erection of walls and enclosures, and the
creation of hard standing form part of the Article 4(2) Direction and require planning permission.

The tendency towards close-boarded fencing is one that is having a very tangible visual impact. Apart from being a characteristically modern approach, these fences are quite expensive, require regular maintenance over the years and make it difficult to establish planting due to overshadowing and wind damage. Timber fences also tend to be stained in eye-catching colours that are often unsympathetic to an historic setting.

Garden structures can also be jarring elements if poorly located, badly designed or brightly coloured.

Walls

Stone walls, both boundary and retaining are the most common means of enclosure in the village and are a significant contributing factor to the character of the Conservation Area. The majority are constructed from granite or killas with a simple stone cap. Most are mortared and in some instances coursed. However, there are a few areas of Cornish hedge where the dry stone walls have soft caps of vegetation.

For new enclosure stone walling is likely to be the most suitable option, provided the height and style relates to any established local trend.

There are no historic brick boundary walls in Charlestown.

Railings

Whilst not abundant there is clear evidence that cast or wrought iron railings were historically a more significant element of the townscape than today. Like so many places, a lot of ironwork was removed during wartime.

There are some buildings and locations which would benefit considerably from the re-introduction of railings. As well as being attractive items in their own right they also offer definition to the streetscene and can be a real enhancement to some types of property. The most common application is on properties with a minimal front garden or yard; in these locations they offer demarcation without visual weight and avoid shading windows or planting.

Hedges

In the more rural parts of the village and where property adjoins farmland, hedges are characteristic. A mixed deciduous planting of hawthorn, field maple, hazel, holly, beech and other indigenous species is most traditional. Within a few years such a hedge can be laid to form a dense and effective boundary that is a wildlife resource that can draw insects, birds and small mammals into gardens.

Single species plantings of beech, yew, laurel or box may be appropriate in some circumstances but are not a practical solution for most places and they demand more maintenance than a rustic mixed hedge.

Modern coniferous hedges support little wildlife and can often be unattractive and not very neighbourly.

Garden structures

The siting of sheds, summerhouses, decking, gazebos or other structures should be sensitively located. If visible locations are unavoidable, careful attention should be paid to scale, form design and naturally painted materials should be used to make the structures less jarring.

Garden structures currently form part of the Article 4(2) Direction and require planning permission. In some instances such as in prominent undeveloped front gardens such structures will be unacceptable.
Enclosure : A summary

• Retain historic enclosure wherever possible.
• If enclosure has been lost, consider the locality and use an appropriate replacement.

Townscape features

In addition to the buildings and walls that give Charlestown its special character there are other items that make a significant contribution to the overall appearance. There are attractive items that need to be cherished and retained; others are in need of repair or enhancement.

Floorscape

As detailed in the accompanying appraisal, there are a number of different surviving historic floorscape treatments reflecting the good selection of local materials available. These include beach pebble cobbles, granite kerbing and granite paving.

Some of the streets in the villages have no pavements due to the narrowness of the carriageway, but some have gutters lined with historic stone or cobbles. Former ore floors have cobbled surfaces which form a lively surface which reflect their location in terms of tradition and materials. The quayside is constructed from locally sourced slab of granite. All historic paving should be maintained and restored if possible.

Carriageways are blacktop and it is better to use this honest and established surfacing rather than introduce manufactured paviours or similar. Road markings in sensitive areas should be kept to a minimum.

Seating

There are some thoughtfully located seats around the village where the pedestrian can stop a while and enjoy the views. Unfortunately some of these are old, mismatching and untidy. There is a need for enhancement of these minor spaces and renewal of seats where needed.

Signage

Business signage should be sympathetic to the character of the building and the area. It should be of a scale, design, materials and fixings compatible to the surrounding historic environment.

Traffic signage should be restricted to those which convey essential information only, should be located onto existing lamp columns, posts or buildings where possible and should avoid large backing panels.

Planting

Trees and hedges are an important element of many significant views and their retention is often of considerable importance. Work to trees in conservation areas is controlled and owners or contractors must contact the LPA for advice before embarking on felling, topping or lopping works.

Decorative planting has its place in the public realm, but needs to be well planned and maintained to be a positive feature. On private land owners can enhance their little bit of the village with suitable planting – it can often be the finishing touch that makes a location really special.

Climate Change

The wide-ranging actions required to limit further damaging emissions, combined with the need to adapt historic assets to make them more resilient to a changing climate, will have significant implications for the historic environment and its future management. However, it is wrong to say that historic buildings cannot be successfully upgraded to mitigate climate change, the significance and
integrity of historic assets can be threatened by poorly designed and ill informed adaptation and mitigation responses. The non renewable character of historic features and potential for their damage and loss should always be taken into account when adaptation and mitigation responses are being planned and executed. Specific detailed advice on how to improve the energy efficiency of historic properties can be found on the English Heritage website:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/climatechangeandyourhome

Cornwall Sustainable Buildings Guide:

Cornwall Council advice on improving the energy efficiency of historic buildings: