HELSTON & THE LIZARD

Historic environment character

The visual and physical attributes for this Community Network Area (CNA) have been summarised within the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study (CSLCS), incorporating parts of CA06, the whole of CA07 and CA08 and parts of CA09 and CA10. (See links at http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=19002)

This is a large and hugely diverse CNA. There are distinct sub-areas with differing historic character; these areas do not correspond necessarily to the boundaries of the CSLCS areas, although the summary descriptions of historic character and landscape within the CSLCS give an acceptable broad-brush summary of that character, but with the following caveats.

1. While the CSLCS landscape subdivisions are a reasonable assessment of the varying HE characteristics of the CNA, it is crucial to recognise that the historic landscapes of the area, apart from the Lizard and Meneage area, are shared with neighbouring CNAs. Management decisions within these zones cannot be made in isolation.

2. The two industrial areas, around Tregonning and Wendron, are distinct from the rest of the area, and from each other. The Tregonning/Godolphin area is a unique combination of prehistoric landscapes with significant monuments (hill fort, defended settlements), early mining landscapes left relatively unaltered by 19th century exploitation, and one of the most important aristocratic landscapes in Cornwall associated with Godolphin House. Porkellis/Wendron, in contrast, is more firmly 19th century - included in the WHS in large part because of the importance of the coherent smallholding landscape around here.

3. Despite the industrial impact in the northern area, this is a generally an area of ancient landscapes - medieval farmland in the north and centre, prehistoric and medieval field patterns in Meneage, open heath containing significant prehistoric remains, and much later WWII remains, on the Lizard. Although the underlying settlement pattern throughout is of scattered farmsteads and hamlets, there is also an unusual number of large villages - some industrial like Leedstown, others, like Mullion or St Keverne, enlarged churchtowns historically functioning in their remote areas as small market centres, with a wealth of vernacular buildings; Lizard is a unique centre developed as much as anything from tourist activity in the 19th century.

4. This area includes the south bank of the Helford creek; although it is less developed than the north bank, with fewer gardens, less settlement, it should still be seen as part of a single historic landscape area - woods, quarries, creeks, quays. It is also rich in prehistoric settlement remains.

5. The long coastline, although varied between the creeks around Helford, and the fishing coves of the Lizard, has long been an important focus of activity - fishing, quarrying, lighthouses and rescue stations, tourism - and consequently the large settlements were set on or just off the coast. Despite being numerous, each remains isolated as communication routes are mostly back into the hinterland rather than along the coast. The maritime and coastal historic environment is of very great significance.

6. Although it feels isolated, its position jutting out into the western approaches
has always given it a strategic value defence and communication is a major theme with important HE assets, associated with coastal warning and communications, with trans-national communications (Poldhu/Goonhilly) and with defence (numerous abandoned as well as still working airfields). There is a range and time-depth of historic assets and monuments in this area second to none in Cornwall.

7. This is an area of high quality urban environments - especially in Helston, with an outstanding legacy of historic buildings and structures and streetscapes; there is a strong relationship with the Cober valley down to Loe Pool which forms an essential part of Helston's character. The strong contained character of the town has been eroded by recent spread at the edges with little recognisable form or relationship to either town or surrounding countryside. Porthleven has its own distinctive character, with harbour side warehouses, terraces on upper slopes, a collection of outstanding 19th century chapels and public buildings, as befits a planned, commercial/industrial port town.

8. A reflection of both the ancient settled nature of the land, and the wealth brought from the Middle Ages by trade, but also industry (quarrying and especially early tin working), there are a large number of well established large houses, gardens, ornamental landscapes and estate farmlands which give the area a distinct character eg. Trelowarren, Bosahan, Clowance, Penrose, Bonython.

9. While the CSLCS gives a good overview of the character of these broad areas greater refinement from an HE point of view is required in dealing with site specific proposals and issues. Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) gives a much finer grain of understanding and a much more focused estimation of archaeological potential.

Evidence base

- Historic Industrial Settlement Surveys - Praze-an-Beeble; Porthleven. A link to these can be found at [http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/](http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/)
- Conservation Area Appraisal – Breage A link to these can be found at [http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=17377](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=17377)
- Conservation Area Management Plan - Helston; Breage; Porthleven A link to these can be found at [http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=17377](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=17377)
- Extensive Urban Survey – Helston. A link to these can be found at [http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/](http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/)
- Other Urban studies - HERS report for Helston. A link to these can be found at


Quarrying study by Colin Bristow for the Cornwall Council Minerals Team

Helford Estuary Historic Audit For further information contact The Cornwall & Scilly Historic Environment Record which contains details of over 50,000 archaeological and historical sites, monuments, buildings, artefacts and landscapes. It can now be searched online via the Heritage Gateway. For further information see http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=8528

Many reports can be accessed as grey literature through the CC Intranet mapping pages and through the mapping link at http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/

Historic Landscape Surveys: Godolphin, St Keverne. For further information contact The Cornwall & Scilly Historic Environment Record. Many reports can be accessed as grey literature through the CC Intranet mapping pages and through the mapping link at http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/

Historic Communications and Military studies: eg. Goonhilly, Marconi Radio Station - Poldhu, Predannack Airfield, Lizard Lighthouse. For further information contact The Cornwall & Scilly Historic Environment Record. Many reports can be accessed as grey literature through the CC Intranet mapping pages and through the mapping link at http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/

HEATH Project: Goon, hal, cliff and croft: the archaeology and landscape history of west Cornwall’s rough ground by Peter Dudley & Managing the historic environment on west Cornwall’s rough ground. by Graeme Kirkham

National Trust Surveys: many NT properties have received detailed archaeological and landscape surveys

Scheduled monument management Surveys: many designated sites have been surveyed as part of an ongoing programme of management works. For further information contact The Cornwall & Scilly Historic Environment Record. Many reports can be accessed as grey literature through the CC Intranet mapping pages and through the mapping link at http://www.historic-cornwall.org.uk/


Missing Evidence

Conservation Area Appraisal - Pengersick CA

Good churchtowns and villages not covered by Conservation Areas - St Keverne, Mullion

Threats

Sea level rise affecting the quays and harbours and scattered hards and slips
development pressures, particularly around Helston

**Major Heritage at Risk**

- Grade Ruan church
- Bayview Terrace, Porthleven

**Current Projects**

- Discovering the Extraordinary World Heritage Project

**Proposed projects depending on resources**

- Higher Level Stewardship schemes (HLS) schemes Ports and Harbours project
- Wider quays/landing paces study - building on e.g. the Estuary audits - to look at management policies
- Recording of maritime features as part of Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment for the South West
- Public realm scheme in Helston (protection of Kennals etc.)
- Buildings at Risk management
- Historic Landscape Characterisation revisions required
- History and survival of quarries and quarrying in area
- Garden/ornamental landscape studies & management plans
- Council owned highway heritage assets
- Cornish Character project to look at heritage assets and local distinctiveness