Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey

Historic characterisation for regeneration

ST IVES

Objective One is part-funded by the European Union
Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey

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St Ives

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September 2005

HES REPORT NO. 2005R069
Acknowledgements

This report was produced as part of the Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey project (CSUS), funded by English Heritage, Objective One Partnership for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (European Regional Development Fund) and the South West Regional Development Agency (South West RDA). Peter Beacham (then Head of Designation), Graham Fairclough (Head of Characterisation), Roger M Thomas (Head of Urban Archaeology), Jill Guthrie (Designation Team Leader, South West) and Ian Morrison (Ancient Monuments Inspector for Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly) liaised with the project team for English Heritage and provided valuable advice, guidance and support.

Nick Cahill (The Cahill Partnership) acted as Conservation Supervisor to the project, providing support with the characterisation methodology and advice on the interpretation of individual settlements. Georgina McLaren (Cornwall Enterprise) performed an equally significant advisory role on all aspects of economic regeneration. Additional help has been given by Steve Edwards and Katie Hooper (Conservation Team, Penwith District Council), Tamsin Daniel (Museum and Heritage Officer, Penwith District Council), Tom Jane (Community Regeneration Facilitator, Penwith District Council), Alex Lake (Project Development Officer, Penwith District Council), Alex Bryce (St Ives Town Forum) and Dr Joanna Martin (Consultant Historian).

Bryn Perry-Tapper is the GIS/SMR supervisor for the project and has played a key role in providing training to the project team and developing the GIS, SMR and Internet components of the CSUS. The Urban Survey team, within Cornwall County Council Historic Environment Service, has been: Kate Newell, Stephanie Russell and Bridget Gillard (Urban Survey Officers), Dr Steve Mills and Jane Powning (Archaeological GIS Mapper) and Graeme Kirkham (Project Manager). Jeanette Ratcliffe, Pete Herring and Pete Rose have acted as Project Co-ordinators, and Pete Herring edited this report.

A draft version of this report has been through a consultation process and revised in light of comments received. Thanks to all those who took part in the consultation process, in particular Sebastian Halliday, Janet Axten, Dr John Ferguson (for comments and for the use of his research on fish cellars included here as Appendix 2), M Veal, Town Clerk, and Geoffrey Scoble.

The project is grateful to Charles Winpenny for permission to reproduce digital images from his Cornwall CAM website (www.cornwallcam.co.uk). The stunning aerial images are by Steve Hartgroves of the Historic Environment Service undertaken as part of the Cornwall and Scilly air-photo mapping project. Other photographs are by the report author.

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Cover illustration

St Ives viewed from the west. Prominent features include the harbour and the grassy promontory of The Island; the densely developed narrow isthmus of land with the sandy expanse of Porthmeor beach to the north, overlooked by the Tate and Barnoon cemetery; the linear terraces respecting the east-west line of the Stennack Valley leading down to the medieval core of the settlement with the church, market place and Fore Street. (CCC Historic Environment Service, ACS 6093, 2003).

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Abbreviations
AONB       Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CAU        Cornwall Archaeological Unit now the Historic Environment Service
CCC        Cornwall County Council
CISI       Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative
CSUS       Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey
CUC        Combined Universities in Cornwall
DCMS       Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DDA        Disability Discrimination Act
DTLR       Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions
ERDF       European Regional Development Fund
GIS        Geographical Information Systems
HES        Historic Environment Service (Cornwall County Council)
LOTS       Living Over The Shop scheme
MCTI       Market and Coastal Town Initiative
PDC        Penwith District Council
South West RDA South West of England Regional Development Agency
TIC        Tourist Information Centre
TPO        Tree Preservation Order
Summary

Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey

The Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey is a pioneering initiative aimed at harnessing the quality and distinctive character of the historic environment to successful and sustainable regeneration. The Survey is investigating 19 historic towns and creating for each an information base and character assessment which will contribute positively to regeneration planning. The project is based within Cornwall County Council’s Historic Environment Service and funded by English Heritage, Objective One and South West RDA.

St Ives

St Ives is one of the premier holiday destinations in Cornwall, attracting visitors throughout the year with its unique character and internationally renowned artistic traditions. It continues to provide local town services for its resident community and hinterland.

The opening of the Tate St Ives in 1993 has lengthened the visitor season, strengthening the creative tourism niche the town has defined for itself. However, despite the ‘picture postcard’ image the town faces many of the same problems as other communities in the Penwith District, including high unemployment with large seasonal variations, low wages and particular difficulties with affordable housing for local people.

There are several regeneration projects currently being developed within the town. St Ives is included in the South West of England’s Regional Development Agency’s Market and Coastal Towns Initiative, the Tate is developing proposals for a Phase 2 extension, a scheme is being developed for the conservation repair and intensification of use of the Bernard Leach pottery on Higher Stennack, a multi-purpose sports and healthy living community facility is proposed for the Rugby Club, off Alexandra Road and within the town other proposals are being developed for specific historic buildings.

Historical development

Given the strategic geographic character of the town’s site it is likely that there has been human activity here since the prehistoric period. There are suggestions that the Island may have been a defended pre-Roman cliff castle. Associations with the sixth century Saint Ia also suggest early Christian activity in the area. Little is known of the early origins of the settlement itself although by the 14th century it had already become an important fishing port.

The 14th century decline of the nearby settlement of Lelant, caused by the silting of its harbour, was an opportunity for the town. St Ives gained much of Lelant’s lost trade and during the 15th century St Ives was promoted and developed as a planted medieval market town. It gained borough status with rights for a weekly market, annual fairs and a church of its own.

The fishing industry was a mainstay of the town’s economy down to the 20th century, with the lengthy sandy beaches providing perfect landing places for the traditional pilchard seining; the enormous shoals gathering in St Ives Bay.

Mercantile trade through the harbour quay was another central element of the settlement’s economy. Records of 16th century sand inundations suggest that trade may have been affected during that period. During the 18th century trade had recovered and the need for improved harbour facilities was considered imperative. Smeaton’s pier was completed in 1770, greatly increasing the size of the harbour and the amount of trade it could accommodate.
The harbour import and export trade and the fishing fleet stimulated numerous associated industries within the town, such as boat building, net and sail making, fish processing and trading. Industrial buildings relating to these activities developed close to the harbour and beaches. Domestic fish processing was also part of the settlement’s economy and a building type with fish cellar on the ground floor with residential accommodation above reached by an external stair is a locally distinct building type found in numbers in the isthmus area between the harbour and Porthmeor beach, an area traditionally known as ‘Down’ long.

Mining was also important in the development and character of the town, with mines located within the urban area itself and in the nearby hinterlands. Much of the trading through the harbour was mine-related. Tin streaming had also been important from the medieval period onwards in the valleys running down to the sea, such as The Stennack.

The 19th century saw great changes in St Ives. There was a further expansion of the harbour with the ‘Victorian Extension’ completed in 1890. Development within the town centre was of an increasingly urban form and density, while residential terraces were built on the slopes of the valleys above for the growing middle-classes and early wealthy tourists who came to the town for the season.

The late 19th century saw the arrival of the railway and with it mass market tourism, softening the impact of the decline of both fishing and mining. Tourists changed the character of the town with the requirements for large hotels, guesthouses and entertainment. Beaches were converted from places of work to places of rest and play with seines, gigs and luggers replaced by beach huts, deck chairs and bathing machines. A late 19th century building boom in the town centre centred on High Street and Tregenna Place and Hill with the construction of impressive institutional buildings such as the Passmore Edwards Library and several bank buildings.

Artists, attracted by the extraordinarily clear quality of light, subject matter and relatively cheap cost of living, lodged with local families, and made their studios in disused fish cellars. From the ‘plein air’ style of painting to the internationally renowned St Ives Modernist Period many famous and influential artists and craft men and women have associations with the town.

The late 20th century saw the re-invention of the town as a quality cultural resort. A wide range of award winning restaurants, good quality cafes and bars, boutiques and design-led shops have been established developing the fashionable image of the town. The foundation of Tate St Ives in 1993 continued the town’s artistic links and was part of a wider change in holidaying habits in Cornwall. The ‘Kiss-me-quick’ element has to some extent been overtaken by a general increase in the sophistication of facilities being offered, such as the popular Lost Gardens of Heligan, the Eden project and Rick Stein in Padstow. This cultural tourism niche has attracted an alternative audience to the town and has lengthened the town’s ‘season’.

**Historic settlement character**

The history and geographical location of St Ives has created a town with a strong, locally distinctive character. Major elements of this include the following.

- The close relationship of the town with its spectacular natural setting; seaward to St Ives Bay, the coastline, harbour, beaches and headlands; and landward, the dramatic topography of the Stennack Valley and the wooded rising ground behind the town.
• The settlement form of the town distinguishes the medieval town set close to the coastline with its characteristically tight, narrow streets and the distinctive maze of pathways and stepped streets, set against dramatically steep hills; and the strongly linear 19th century residential terraces built along the contours of the Stennack Valley and rising land.

• Historic patterns of use and functional distinctions throughout the town underlie areas of distinctive character. For example the industrial quarter of the northern part of the isthmus is defined by the remains and large urban scale of the seine company cellars.

• The built environment of the town contains many notable and varied historic structures, many of which are listed; important 17th century survivals, impressive 18th century town houses and more modest cottages, 19th century three-storied structures, civic and public buildings and robust industrial survivals related to the town's maritime and fishing industry. These buildings vary in style and date but the widespread (although not universal) use of granite, local killas and silvery Cornish slate unite the town's diverse architecture. Another distinctive surface treatment is pebble-dash with applied ornate plaster detailing to doors, windows and quoins.

• The richness and high quality of detail in the streetscapes; from the surviving historic street surfaces, kerbing, paving and drainage gullies to the locally distinctive and attractive door furniture and house names.

Character-based principles for regeneration
These principles have been derived directly from the analysis of the character areas and should underpin all regeneration initiatives in St Ives:

• Respect and safeguard the fundamental importance of the natural setting and physical topography to the character of St Ives, particularly the sloping townscape, highly visible urban skyline, and the views to the harbour and out across St Ives's Bay.

• Recognise the superior quality and particular distinctive character of the historic built environment of St Ives, and achieve equally high quality and distinctiveness in all future new build and the public realm.

• Recognise the importance of individual components of character and distinctiveness seen throughout the historic environment and conserve and enhance these. They include the fine grain elements which provide such a richness of texture, colour and detail throughout the town: street surfacing, gutter channels, granite glinter stones, iron railing details, house names, signs and door furniture, etc.

• Reinstate character and quality in the built environment, public realm and key open spaces where it has been eroded by inappropriate past interventions.

• Respect the different Character Areas within the town and acknowledge and reinforce the urban hierarchy and diversity they represent.

• Present, interpret and promote St Ives as an historic Cornish town of quality, character and significance.

Regeneration and the historic environment: key themes for St Ives

• Understand, conserve and positively manage the historic environment asset

• Respect and strengthen character
- Manage the public realm and enhance the townscape
- Manage traffic and parking
- Improve connectivity – an holistic approach to St Ives
- Creative industries and the historic environment
- Market, promote and interpret
- Manage and enhance the urban greenscape

**Character areas and regeneration opportunities**

This study identified six distinct Character Areas within the historic urban area. Its findings on these areas, together with an assessment of overall settlement character, offer a means of understanding the past and present. In turn, that understanding provides the basis for a positive approach to planning future change which will maintain and reinforce the historic character and individuality of each area – sustainable local distinctiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Area</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Medieval commercial core – The church, Market Place and Fore Street</td>
<td>Reintegrate Fore Street with the rest of the commercial town, Recognise the historic and urban importance of the churchyard as a green oasis in the town centre and encourage further use of this important asset, Celebrate, repair and maintain the surviving historic shop fronts and replace inappropriate late 20th century examples, Reduce streetscape clutter and strongly manage the public realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 19th century town centre</td>
<td>Celebrate, repair and maintain the surviving historic shop fronts and replace inappropriate late 20th century examples, Address the negative impact of certain poorly designed modern buildings, Create a better functioning urban space at Royal Square, Enhance the forecourt of the PDC offices, Reduce the negative impact of traffic and increase pedestrian priority, Promote the use of the impressive and publicly accessible sub-tropical gardens, Enhance the Guildhall Passage (ope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Harbour</td>
<td>Conserve and protect historic buildings and architectural integrity, Strike a balance between retaining and strengthening the harbour as a viable place of work and safeguarding its historic fabric and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
authentic character of the area. The robust granite pier, its two lighthouses and the popular family beach form an important part of the town. The surrounding buildings have been changed dramatically, and often not sensitively, reflecting the changing role of the harbour now St Ives’ busiest tourist focal point.

4. Down'long
This densely packed ‘fishing village’ area of the town has a unique and powerful sense of place. The specialised architecture of domestic fish cellars, the remains of the industrial fish cellars, good surviving street surfacing and granite gutters retain character and identity. The semi-natural headland of the Island and the expanse of Porthmeor Beach with the Tate St Ives overlooking it mark the area out as special.

- Conserve and protect historic buildings and architectural integrity
- Identify, protect, and maintain important streetscape elements
- Reduce the impact of wheely bins
- Reduce the impact of traffic in this sensitive area
- Retain the Island’s semi-wild character

5. The terraces
Residential use now dominates the character of this area, although historically it was a highly industrial area of mining and tin streaming. The strongly linear and architecturally uniform mid 19th - early 20th century residential terraces dominate. Set on the rising ground behind the historic core of the town, the terraces stack up the Stennack Valley sides. Importantly several earlier streets and groups of cottage rows of 18th and 19th century date survive.

- Protect the architectural integrity of the buildings in this area
- Protect boundary walls, railings, gates and front gardens from conversion for car parking
- Recognise and enhance the importance and quality of this area as a key approach to the town centre
- Enhance the footpaths that connect the town with the car parks
- Recognise, respect and enhance the importance of gardens, mature trees and planting in the area
- Reintegrate the Stennack Stream into the surrounding streetscape

6. Coastal suburb and railway resort
This area represents an affluent suburb of the town and an important part of its development as a ‘railway resort’. The large detached houses, villas, town-house terraces and grand hotels are amongst the most imposing architectural statements in the town designed on a grand scale and set within large spacious gardens. The quality of materials, architectural design and generous scale and spacing emphasises the sense of quality and prestige of this area. Its splendid views, overlooking the stunning Porthminster Beach and town below, also include bay-wide panoramas. This area is the subject of views out of town where the tiers of development are highly visible stacked up the coastal slope. The mature planting and trees of the well stocked large private grounds and gardens make a positive feature in wider town views.

- Enhance the train and bus stations as important arrival points and explore the possibility of an integrated public transport interchange
- Enhance the Malakoff as an important public open space
- Respect and celebrate the architectural quality of the area
- Counter the threat of plot subdivision and increased development
- Recognise, respect and enhance the importance of planting in the area
1 Introduction

Regeneration and the historic towns of Cornwall and Scilly

In July 1999 Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly were designated as an Objective One area, bringing potential investment from European funds of more than £300m over the nine-year spending period. Economic regeneration schemes and development projects within the region’s towns are likely to form a major element of the Objective One Programme.

Regeneration on this scale offers an unparalleled opportunity for contemporary contributions in urban design and architecture to the built environment of Cornwall and Scilly’s towns. At the same time, the Objective One programme emphasises environmental sustainability (including the historic environment) and regional distinctiveness as key considerations in regeneration planning. The process of change launched by current regeneration initiatives could, if not carefully managed, have a negative impact on the historic environment and the unique character and sense of place of each of these settlements. The pressure to achieve rapid change could in itself result in severe erosion and dilution of their individuality and particular distinctiveness and, at worst, their transformation into ‘anywhere’ towns.

It is clear from recent research that a high-quality historic urban environment and the distinctiveness and sense of place integral to it are themselves primary assets in promoting regeneration. The effect may be direct, through heritage tourism, for example, but there is a more powerful and decisive impact in prompting a strong sense of identity and pride of place which in turn creates a positive and confident climate for investment and growth.

This synergy between the historic environment and economic regeneration was recognised and strongly advocated in the Power of Place review of policies on the historic environment carried out by English Heritage in 2000, and its value clearly highlighted in the government’s response, The Historic Environment: A Force for the Future (2001). The tool by which the two may be linked to create a framework for sustainable development in historic settlements is characterisation.

Characterisation and regeneration

‘The government . . . wants to see more regeneration projects, large and small, going forward on the basis of a clear understanding of the existing historic environment, how this has developed over time and how it can be used creatively to meet contemporary needs.’

(DCMS / DTLR, The Historic Environment: A Force for the Future (2001), 5.2)

‘Characterisation’ provides a means of understanding the diverse range of factors which combine to create ‘distinctiveness’ and ‘sense of place’. It involves the creation of a comprehensive knowledge base on the historic environment. This includes what is known of a settlement’s historic development and urban topography (that is, the basic components which have contributed to the physical shaping of the historic settlement, such as market places, church enclosures, turnpike roads, railways, etc.), together with an overview of the surviving historic fabric, distinctive architectural forms, materials and treatments and the significant elements of town and streetscapes. Characterisation may also provide the
basis for assessing the potential for buried and standing archaeological remains and their likely significance, reducing uncertainty for regeneration interests by providing an indication of potential constraints.

Characterisation is also a means whereby the historic environment can itself provide an inspirational matrix for regeneration. It emphasises the historic continuum which provides the context for current change and into which the regeneration measures of the present must fit if the distinctive and special qualities of each historic town are to be maintained and enhanced. It both highlights the ‘tears in the urban fabric’ wrought by a lack of care in the past and offers an indication of appropriate approaches to their repair.

Characterisation is not intended to encourage or to provide a basis for imitation or pastiche: rather, it offers a sound basis on which the 21st century can make its own distinct and high-quality contribution to places of abiding value.

Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey

The Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey (CSUS) was set up – funded by English Heritage and the Objective One Partnership for Cornwall and Scilly (European Regional Development Fund ERDF) – as a key contributor to regeneration in the region. Additional funding has been provided by the South West of England Regional Development Agency. The project is investigating 19 historic towns and creating for each the information base and character assessment which will provide a framework for sustainable action within these historic settlements.

These towns have been identified, in consultation with planning, conservation and economic regeneration officers within the seven district, borough and unitary authorities in the region, as those which are likely to be the focus for regeneration. The project’s ‘target’ settlements are:

- Hayle
- Newlyn
- Penzance
- St Ives
- Camborne
- Helston
- Redruth
- Falmouth
- Penryn
- Truro
- St Austell
- Newquay
- Bodmin
- Camelford
- Launceston
- Liskeard
- Saltash
- Torpoint
- Hugh Town (St Mary’s, Isles of Scilly).

CSUS is a pioneering initiative aimed directly at cutting across the boundary that traditionally divides conservation and economic development. Nationally, it is the first such project carrying out a characterisation-based assessment of the historic urban environment specifically to inform and support a regional economic regeneration programme. Future regeneration initiatives in other historic settlements, both in Cornwall and further afield, will benefit from the new approach developed by the project.

Cornwall’s historic towns

Although best known for its coast, countryside and mining, Cornwall has an unusually high density of historic towns. All are small by English standards (the largest, St Austell, containing only 28,000 people in 2001), but all have a full range of urban components. These include commercial, administrative, community and ecclesiastical buildings, various public and private spaces, and varieties of residential areas, from dense terraces of workers housing to large
detached town houses set in their own enclosed grounds.

While each has these components in common, each Cornish town also has its own particular history and its own form and character. Many developed from medieval market towns, evenly spaced about twelve miles apart and integrated into ancient road patterns. These towns often retain key elements like market places, burgage plots and back lanes, but each has subsequently experienced different influences and so has developed its own identity. Other towns began as ports, resorts, fishing settlements, dock towns and centres of industry, and so contain specialised buildings, structures and spaces. Of course, each town also has its own response to local topography, makes special use of local building materials, is subject to local building traditions and national economic and social trends, and is influenced by varying degrees of control by local landowners.

It will therefore be important when planning and designing regeneration initiatives, and when maintaining the fabric of Cornish towns, to take care to recognise the essential elements of the town’s own unique character. This should inform the design of all works and so ensure that each town retains this unique character.

All Cornish towns are also complex places, having developed either gradually or in surges, and so have patterns of zones or areas that vary according to such things as phase, form, condition, quality, activity, tranquillity, open-ness and uniformity. There is also variety in the responses people, whether as communities or as individuals, have to these areas and their components. So, as well as maintaining each town’s distinctiveness in relation to other Cornish towns, regeneration and management should also ensure that this variety of historic character within the towns is also maintained and enhanced.

CSUS reports

CSUS reports present the major findings and recommendations arising from the project’s work on each town. They are complemented by computer-based digital mapping and data recorded using ArcView Geographical Information System (GIS) software, and together the two sources provide comprehensive information on historic development, urban topography, significant components of the historic environment, archaeological potential and historic character.

Importantly, the reports also identify opportunities for heritage-led regeneration and positive management of the historic environment. However, they are not intended to be prescriptive design guides, but should rather be used by architects, town planners and regeneration officers to inform future development and planning strategies.

The reports and associated digital resources are shared with the appropriate local authorities; economic regeneration, planning and conservation officers therefore have immediate access to the detailed information generated by the project. Additional information is held in the Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record, maintained by the Historic Environment Service of Cornwall County Council (CCC).

Public access to the report and to the associated mapping is available via the project’s website - www.historic-cornwall.org.uk - or by appointment at the offices of Cornwall County Council’s Historic Environment Service, Old County Hall, Truro.
Extent of the study area

The history and historic development of St Ives has been investigated and mapped for the whole of its extent as defined by Penwith Local Plan. However, the detailed characterisation and analysis of urban topography that together form the primary elements of this study are closely focused on the historic urban extent of the settlement. For the purposes of this project this area is defined as that which is recognisably ‘urban’ in character on the second edition Ordnance Survey (OS) Revision 1:2500 map, c1907. Outlying rural settlements that have been incorporated into the modern urban area since 1907 are intentionally excluded (Figs. 1 and 2).
2 St Ives: the context

St Ives is one of the premier holiday destinations in Cornwall. Its maritime heritage, intricate townscape, beaches and proximity to the spectacular landscape of the Penwith peninsula attract visitors throughout the year. It is nationally and internationally recognised for its artistic traditions and community, including a succession of well known artists who over the last century have lived, worked and exhibited in the town. This aspect of the town has been significantly reinforced by the opening of the Tate St Ives gallery in 1993.

Situated on the north coast of the far west of Cornwall (Fig 1), within Penwith District Council (PDC), it plays a significant role as the authority’s second largest town with a population of 11,165 in 2001 and as a significant attraction into the district.

Located approximately 6 km from the A30, it is 12 km north east of Penzance and 6 km north west of Hayle. The town has a branch line rail connection linking at St Erth to the mainline service between Penzance and London Paddington.

The regeneration context

By Iain Mackelworth and Georgina McLaren, Cornwall Enterprise, January 2004

In spite of its picture postcard image, St Ives faces many of the same problems as other communities in Penwith District, with high unemployment marked by large seasonal variations, low wages and particular difficulties in relation to affordable housing for local people. The population profile is generally slightly older than the UK as a whole but there is a significant contrast between St Ives...
North ward and St Ives South (covering the historic town and harbour). St Ives South shows an older-retired population (the average age of residence is 47.6 years compared with a Penwith average of 43.1 and a national average 38.6) whilst St Ives North is characterised by a population with a higher than average number of young people. This ward is classified as an area of severe deprivation with high unemployment and as such qualifies for assistance through Neighbourhood Renewal and other funding programmes; many of these are aimed at improving community facilities and creating opportunities for training and employment.

The town provides a range of basic services to its population and surrounding area, but tourism is the mainstay of the economy. With the opening of the Tate St Ives, the town has developed and built upon its artistic associations to create a niche which it is now exploiting with some success. Along with the Eden Project and the National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Tate St Ives forms one of the ‘big three’ modern year-round tourist attractions in Cornwall which form the so-called ‘Golden triangle’.

As well as Tate St Ives the town has other important museums including Barbara Hepworth’s Studio and Garden, Bernard Leach Studios and St Ives Museum at Wheal Dream which houses the collections of the St Ives Old Cornwall Society.

Although there are no definitive figures for the number of visitors to St Ives, the Cornwall Visitor survey (2002-2003) showed that 29.2% of visitors to the county plan to visit the town, making it the most popular destination for visitors to the county (although this may now have given way to the Eden Project). The survey also showed that 9.7% of visitors to Cornwall were staying in St Ives during their holiday (second only to Newquay). Within St Ives there are 78 registered hotels and guest houses providing 831 rooms.

Recent research carried out by Economic Research Associates for Cornwall County Council and the Tate St Ives describes a significant retail sector with an estimated 150 shops and galleries in the main retail area. The importance of tourism to the town is reflected by the number of outlets catering for the leisure (tourism) market and many retail outlets claim to take 60/70% of their annual turnover between July and September. The retail sector is also notable for the dominance of small independent shops and the relatively low number of national chains. Rising rents and a very quick turn-around on retail lets indicate that the retail market is extremely buoyant with a demand which cannot be met.

The night-time economy is also an important sector within the town and there are approximately 65 restaurants, pubs and cafés in central St Ives. Once again this sector is substantially aimed at tourists visiting during the main summer season. In recognition of the potential for conflict between the restaurant/café sector with retail activity in the town centre, the Penwith Local Plan precludes the provision of further catering outlets at the ground floor level in order to safeguard shops. There is also a restriction preventing the opening of any more take-away restaurants. These policies are in response to the physical constraints of the town centre where there is no further land available for retail development.

There are a number of indications that the town’s tourist economy is robust. For example, occupancy rates for hotels are well above the county average. Also, despite the continuing importance of the town on the main tourist season, there has been a growth in visitors and trade during the shoulder months. Christmas and New Year are also ‘busy times’.
This has been due in large part to the success of the town in re-inventing itself, from a traditional beach resort to a destination for cultural tourism, a transformation that has been driven by the Tate St Ives. South West Tourism reported that in 2002 the Tate St Ives had in excess of 240,000 visitors and recent visitor surveys have shown that 78% of visitors had planned to visit the gallery before they left for home. However, the impact of the Tate St Ives goes beyond the number of visitors it has attracted. The ‘Tate effect’, as it has become known, is characterised by an increasing number of ABC1 visitors (professionals, managers, owners of small establishments, clerical workers and principal officers in the civil service and local government), the extension of the season into the shoulder months and a higher proportion of short-breaks and an overall increase in the average level of visitor spend per capita. In 1996, it was calculated that the gallery was effectively pumping a further £16.5 million per year into the local economy.

In addition, there has also been a 20% rise in rates in the centre of town in the five years after the Tate opened. There has been a steady improvement in the quality of accommodation, including the emergence of so-called boutique hotels (small, design led hotels) and an increasing number of ‘up-market’ restaurants. The Creative Edge – a report on cultural industries in Penwith (April 2001) - concludes that the cultural industry is one of the fastest growth sectors in the area and the potential exists to expand and build upon the Tate phenomenon by targeting culturally motivated tourism. At the time of writing there are a number of projects planned for the town which will strengthen the ‘cultural’ sector. These include a potential Phase 2 for the Tate St Ives, the development of the Leach Pottery in St Ives North Ward and the development of the Porthmeor Studios.

The County Structure Plan classifies St Ives as a main town local centre. The strategy for these centres will be to consolidate their roles and functions and support balanced growth though jobs, services and infrastructure. Employment should focus on the needs of local firms and on opportunities relating to local characteristics and distinctiveness.

The European Objective One Single Programming Document identifies Hayle/St. Ives as a key town for employment growth. In practice most scope for new employment space is to be found in the extensive brownfield sites around Hayle rather than in St. Ives, where space within the historic town centre is at a premium, with no obvious areas for development. Towards Prosperity in Penwith, the Objective One Integrated Area Plan, notes that there is scope for a number of initiatives to enhance the environmental, cultural and historic assets of the town and in particular to build on existing resources rather than new developments.

The negative effect of St. Ives’ success is severe traffic congestion and limited parking which are significant issues, particularly during the summer season. Park and ride schemes operate from the edge of town with 1,000 parking spaces at Trenwith. St. Ives is fortunate in being served by a year round branch line which joins the main line at St. Erth. This
enables park and rail schemes to be operated from St. Erth and Lelant at peak times. Any major developments such as the proposed second phase of the Tate are likely to require an enhanced Green Transport Plan. Congestion will be a key issue in the forthcoming review of the Local Transport Plan for the St. Ives Bay area.

In late 1993 the first steps were taken to establish an Action Team with the aims of restoring and enhancing the environmental and historic qualities of the town, promoting action in relation to the economy and addressing social needs. In 1997 the Civic Trust Regeneration Unit and local architects Poynton Bradbury Wynter produced a community action plan for the town as part of this. This action plan addresses conservation, tourism, economic, transport and social issues.

Several local groups are involved in regeneration proposals for the town including the St Ives Trust and the St Ives Area Forum. The Trust set up in the early 1960s and established as a charity in 1967 to educate the public about St Ives and District. It has supported the Archive Study Centre since 1996. It has a Policy Document laying out a suite of proposals for the town which is currently being reviewed and updated.

The town has recently been included in the South West of England Regional Development Agency’s Market and Costal Towns Initiative. An award of over £44,000 has been made to enable a new evaluation of the town’s needs and aspirations as a basis of promoting a longer term strategic plan.

There are several regeneration projects currently being developed within the town. Tate St Ives Phase 2 proposes an extension onto Barnoon car park, intended to cater for 275,000 visitors (35,000 more than present). The Bernard Leach pottery on Higher Stennack is proposing an intensification of use including an improved museum and the creation of incubation units for ceramicists in partnership with the Combined Universities in Cornwall. The Rugby Club, off Alexandra Road, is developing proposals for refurbishment and creation of a multi-purpose sports and healthy living community facility. Within the town itself proposals are being developed for specific buildings including the Mariners’ Church and Porthmeor Studios.

**Landscape and setting**

Tucked in behind the promontory called The Island on the west side of the sweeping arc of St Ives Bay, St Ives town is at the north-eastern corner of the West Penwith peninsula in west Cornwall. The north facing coast (the Porthmeor side) is windswept and denuded of significant tree cover with the east facing coast (Porthminster) and the Stennack valley being more sheltered, wooded and green. The neighbouring coastline is dramatic with sheer granite and greenstone cliffs, secluded coves and long stretches of golden, sandy beaches and dunes. Sea and sky views stretch for miles, together with stunning views of the rest of the coastline of the bay.

Views inland are restricted by the rising ground behind the town. Skyline features include Tregenna Castle and its parkland.
and the distant but distinctive Knill's monument to the south and the granite uplands of Rosewall Hill to the west.

The Stennack River rises near Rosewall and has cut a deep valley which emerges into the bay just north of the little point of Pedn Olva.

While a strip of resort-based suburbia stretches southwards along the coast to Carbis Bay, running west and inland from St Ives is one of the world's oldest enclosed farming landscapes. Patterns of small irregular shaped fields bounded by granite walls (whose grounders were eased into place two or three thousand years ago) fill the coastal plateau and the valleys of St Ives, Towednack and Zennor parishes, and run on towards Land's End. Prehistoric monuments dot the landscape. This ancient landscape is an important element of St Ives, providing, alongside the great granite cliffs and heathy tor-topped hills, a beautiful and inspiring context for the town. The air here is famously clean and clear, allowing the colours of land, sea, and townscape to shine out clearly.

The spectacular scenery and natural setting contribute to the land to the west and south being defined as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and as an Area of Great Landscape Value. To the west is part of the Heritage Coast and the hinterland contains many Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Cornwall Wildlife Trust Sites and Areas of Great Scientific Value.

**Historic environment designations**

The current historic environment designations in the historic urban core of St Ives are shown on Figure 5a and 5b and listed below.

- One Scheduled Monument: the 15th century lantern cross by the church.
- 298 Listed Buildings (one Grade I: Church of St Ia; four Grade II*: the harbour including Smeaton's Pier and its two lighthouses, Western Pier, the wharfs and slipways; remainder Grade II).
- A Registered Historic Park and Garden: Barbara Hepworth’s Sculpture Garden, Grade II.
- A Conservation Area covers much of the medieval extent of the town.
- An Article 4 direction dating from 1979 is also in place, covering the Conservation Area plus a little land beyond it.

The strong relationship of the town with its impressive natural setting is an important element in the character of St Ives (CCC Historic Environment Service, ACS F69 (48), 2005).
3 Historic development

St Ives has a fascinating and complex development and topographical history (see Figs 3 and 4). The town is internationally famous for its influential art colony, established in the 19th century and continuing today with Tate St Ives and the town’s vibrant creative industries. The importance of its maritime trade and fishing past is also widely recognised. However, the town’s story is more complicated and multifaceted than this. At its core is an unusually late planted medieval market town. Mining also has had a considerable influence in shaping the evolution and character of the town we enjoy today.

Early origins

Given the strategic geographic importance of the site of St Ives, at the mouth of an estuary, and with the headland and large bay providing some degree of shelter along the rugged Atlantic north coast, it is likely that this location has been occupied since prehistoric times. Indeed archaeological evidence suggests prehistoric activity in and around the area with important remains of settlement, farming, burial and ritual monuments scattering the surrounding landscape and still forming an important part of the character and local distinctiveness of the Penwith peninsula.

The promontory headland of ‘the Island’, cherished symbol of the town, was earlier referred to by names containing the element dinas (Dynas Ya in 1446 and Pedinas – ‘headland of the fortification’ recorded by Leland in 1539). This, together with its distinctive topographical form is likely to indicate the presence of a pre-Roman cliff castle. No remains of prehistoric defensive banks and ditches have been identified and later defences and development have probably overlain them.

The origins of the modern settlement of St Ives are obscure, but its name seemingly denotes some religious significance and activity. Initially ‘Porthia’ (1291) or ‘Porthya’ (1284) and later Sancta Ye, finally Seynt Yves (1579), the name is derived from the name of an early medieval Irish saint Ia who is reputed to have landed here in the 5th or 6th centuries. Following her martyrdom an oratory of her relics is said to have been located on the site of the present church. The name Porthminster, supposed site of a later medieval chapel partially exposed from sand in about 1870, also suggests a monastic site. A holy well, also named after the saint, on the cliff over-looking Porthmeor, maintains this link today.
Medieval fishing and market town

Lelant, some three miles south east of St Ives, was the head settlement of the parish during the medieval period (Fig.1). It was the principal market and port and contained the parish church. However, during the 14th century Lelant’s port became heavily silted and its importance and central-place functions weakened. This decline was the stimulus for the growth and development of St Ives as it gained much of Lelant’s former trade. Prior to this, ‘Porth-ia’, was unimportant as a centre of population, but by the early 14th century had already become the most important fishing port in Penwith. (‘Porth’ refers to a ‘landing place’ or ‘haven’, usually in a fishing context). A harbour is recorded here in 1342-43 built for the protection of fishing vessels. The late medieval period saw the planned development of the settlement as a fishing, market and seaport town.

Of major importance within the economy of the early town was the harbour and the lengthy beaches. St Ives became one of the two principal medieval harbours on the north coast (with Padstow) and the premier pilchard fishery in Cornwall. Extensive trading links developed, notably with Brittany and Ireland and Mediterranean countries, especially Italy and Spain (whose Catholic populations consumed large quantities of Cornish salted pilchards, especially during Lent).

The medieval quay was defined by a curving pier 180 metres west of the current Smeaton’s Pier, close to the present day Carnglaze Place. This sheltered location, tucked in the lee of the Island headland and the rocky isthmus is very similar to the location of other north coast ports such as Newquay and even Boscastle. The enclosed quay was therefore much smaller than the present day arrangement and it is likely that the bulk of the fishing activity was focused on the surrounding long and sheltered beaches, ideal locations for landing fish. This function is related in the use of the ‘Porth’ prefix seen in many of the surrounding beach names; Porthmeor – ‘big haven’, Porthgwidden – ‘white haven’ and Porthminster.

It is likely that a small medieval settlement developed around the quay and fishing beaches; what form and extent this took is not certain, although it is likely to have favoured the more level terrain to the west of the harbour and the southern, sheltered side of the rocky isthmus.

In parallel with the decline of Lelant, St Ives appears to have been purposely developed as a planted borough town. This development occurs during the 15th century and is notably late for such a venture, presumably due to Lelant’s ebbing fortunes. This therefore appears to be a deliberate bid by Sir Robert Willoughby, the lord of St Ives manor, to take for St Ives (and from Lelant) the role of central place and market town.

Elements of this development continue to shape the way the town functions today. By the early 15th century the settlement had grown in status and presumably population enough to warrant, afford and aspire to its own church and religious and taxation freedom from Lelant. After a considerable period of negotiation, appeals to the pope and several papal bulls, a church was built on the site of the oratory containing St Ia’s relics (although Lelant retained some degree of control and taxation rights). The building of the church (consecrated in 1428) is notable in that such a large structure was built as one piece, demonstrating that the settlement was already of some size and considerable wealth by this time. The greater part of the present church dates from the early 15th century as does the lantern cross in the churchyard. Much of the church is of Zennor granite, transported by sea.
In 1487 Sir Robert Willoughby, lord of the manor of St Ives, obtained a charter for the town to hold a weekly market and two annual fairs, one on St Andrew’s Day (November 30th) which became known as Fair Mo. A large market place was laid out close to the church, possibly originally defined by Back Street to the east and Market Strand to the west funnelling into Fore Street to the north (see Fig. 4). Over time this large open area, which would have been used for selling and buying livestock and other agricultural produce, was encroached upon and reduced to today’s surviving Market Place, forming a much smaller area than the medieval open space. A market house was built in 1490, largely paid for by Willoughby, on the site of the present structure of 1832. Overhanging penthouses were fixed on the exterior walls, and there were wooden stalls underneath. The upper floor was used as a courtroom.

Fore Street, as now, was the main commercial street of the medieval town. It was laid along a terrace cut into the sloping terrain with land rising steeply above it to the west and sloping steeply down to the harbour and beach to the east. The level nature of the street disguises the dramatic topography in which it is set. However, this can be glimpsed in the stepped and sloping opes running up and down from the street. These opes formed the only connection with the harbour until the 20th century creation of Wharf Road. Until this date the industrial buildings surrounding the harbour fronted directly onto the sand (as is still the case at Porthmeor beach).

Other features of the medieval town were a number of chapels, with origins predating the church. These chapels include St Nicholas on the Island (now extensively rebuilt) and St Leonard on the original historic quayside. (NB The present building purported to be St Leonard Chapel could not in fact be the medieval structure as it relates to...
Smeaton’s 18th century pier and not the earlier medieval quay.) A third chapel, to St Luke, was in the ‘Dennis’ (Island) area.

As well as the sea trade, fishing and the agricultural market and fairs, it is likely that tin streaming was also a significant element of the medieval town’s economy. The Stennack valley was the focus for this activity, again reflected in the place-name evidence (Steynek is first recorded in 1334 and means ‘place of tin’).

Peter Sheppard has suggested the approximate medieval extent of the settlement (see Fig. 3) with development across the isthmus neck, extending along the sea front towards Skidden Hill, with some development at the base of the Stennack Valley. With further research and archaeological excavation this may be tested and refined.

The medieval road network still forms part of the system in use today, although later engineering, terracing and culverting of the Stennack and the need for wider, less steep routes has marginalised some examples (see Fig 4). Surviving medieval routes tend to be narrow and curving.

The medieval period, therefore, saw the extensive development of the town and the creation of its two focal points; the quay and harbour with fishing and trading activity and the urban grouping of church, market place and principal street. By 1500 the settlement’s status had been confirmed and borough status obtained and in 1588 St Ives returned two members to parliament.

‘…overcoverid with sandes’

However, the growth of the settlement was not unchecked. Sackings and fires started by French raiders in the mid-15th and early 16th century resulted in the destruction of buildings. The settlement of Porthminster is recorded as being rased to the ground by such an attack.

‘Turkish’ pirates were also a threat during the 1630s.

Fortifications against these and other attacks were built. Willoughby built a fort or blockhouse furnished with large guns for the protection of the bay. This is likely to be the structure known as the ‘Castle’ said to have been built in 1490 just to the east of the medieval pier and quay. Although thought to have been demolished during the 18th and 19th century harbour redevelopments some element of the structure may be retained in Quay House. This seems to be unrecognised at present and if further research confirms its identity, protection through scheduling or listing would be
desirable to recognise its national importance.

Further fortifications were constructed on the southern slope of the Island. The remains of bulwarks, recorded in 1535, are visible today: huge ramparts with two bastions defending a gun position at the top of the hill.

The exposed location of the settlement also caused difficulties. Sea erosion has changed the shape of the coast line and the topography of the town. For instance, the church is said to have originally been protected from the sea by a field used for grazing sheep which was lost during a fierce storm!

Sixteenth century records talk of devastating sand inundations which resulted in much of the town being abandoned. For example, in c1538 John Leland recorded that:

‘most part of the houses in the peninsula be sore appressed or overcoverid with sandes…this calamite hath continued ther little above 20 yeres. The best part of the town now standith in the south part of the peninsula, up toward another hille, for defence from the sandes’.

The most severely affected areas were the harbour, its pier and quay being described by Leland as ‘sore choked with sande’, and the ‘neck’ of land connecting with the Island.

(Leland also recorded the presence of an early lighthouse when writing about the Chapel of St Nicholas on the Island adding that in the same place was ‘a pharos for lighte for shippes sailing by night in these quarters’).

Although the inundated harbour would have caused difficulties for the mercantile trading activity it would not have affected the seine fishing severely as the beaches would have continued to function as before. However, in 1602 Carew declared St Ives a small inconsequential town.

‘For the northwest wind that plays the tyrant in this coast by drifts of sand bath so beaten upon it, that from hence it is translated and removed.’

In 1581 there had been a petition to erect a new pier but Carew seems to provide evidence that this had not been achieved. He notes:

‘attempts made for bettering the road’ [harbour] ‘with a pier, but either want, or slackness, or impossibility, bitherto withhold the effect…..’.

In 1626 the town’s pier and quay were described as decayed, the posts wasted, and the harbour and adjoining cellars still partly filled with sand. New harbour dues were introduced to pay for the repair of the pier showing that despite the inundation the harbour was still in use, with fish cellars nearby, even if the town had been partially displaced.

Despite sending two members to Parliament in 1558, St Ives was not granted a Royal Charter of Incorporation until 1639. More misfortune occurred shortly after this with the death of about one-third of its inhabitants in the plague of 1647.

However, the quality and prosperity demonstrated in the surviving 17th century buildings suggest that conditions may not have been as bad as claimed. The late 17th century saw a boom in mining in west Penwith and it is likely that St Ives benefited as a result. It seems likely that a revival in the town’s fortunes had begun by this date.

**Smeaton’s pier**

A considerable increase in fishing and mercantile fleets during the 18th century, (part of the general increase in activity begun in the late 17th century) made improvements to the harbour facilities imperative.

In 1767 work began on a new pier designed by the great civil engineer John Smeaton. This pier, completed in 1770, was half the length of the current pier, and the stone lighthouse, built in 1831
and designed by architects James and Edward Harvey, marks its original length.

The construction of this pier stabilised, to some extent, the sand movements that had troubled the town. In 1798 an adit was driven through from Castle Rock and a reservoir and launders built to flush sand from the harbour to prevent it from silting up again.

The new pier greatly increased the size of the harbour and the amount of trade it could accommodate. It stimulated a boom as seen in the annual amounts collected as harbour dues – 1770 - £593, 1814 - £1,280, 1836 - £1,824. Imports to the harbour were coal (which was said to have turned the sand grimy), French salt (for use in the curing of fish) iron, general merchandise, leather, groceries and timber. Exports were mainly fish (with a massive pilchard trade with the Bay of Naples, Italy and a significant mackerel and herring trade with Bristol, Bath and London), but also included fluctuating amounts of copper ore and tin.

The harbour and beaches were hubs of activity, with mackerel and pilchard luggers, coasting vessels loading or discharging cargoes, seine boats and gigs. Associated industries including boat building, rope making, net making, sail making, barking houses, coopering, fish processing and trading – curing, bulking and smoking were centred on the harbour and the beaches but were also seen elsewhere in town. The former industrial buildings flanking the harbour have been radically changed since conversion from industrial use.

As well as a place of work the harbour was also a focus of the community with Fishermen’s lodges (Shamrock, Rose and Bay View) and inns lining the harbour, with the surviving 17th century Sloop previously flanked by The Globe, White Hart and Ship Aground.
Also within the harbour was the Royal Customs House, whose staff was charged with the task of monitoring the harbour comings and goings and levying and collecting the relevant taxes. The town was notorious for smuggling and this job must have been an uphill battle.

The area of the isthmus was dominated by the needs of the harbour and the fishing fleet. Locally known as Down'long this area was home, as well as place of work, to much of the fishing community. Much of the processing of the fish was undertaken in domestic cellars and courtyards in this area (see Appendix 2). A distinct building type was developed with fish cellar on the ground floor and residential floors above reached by a prominent flight of stairs. Cats roamed the streets scavenging fish and guarding the produce and nets against rats. The smell of the area must have been quite overpowering with debris being washed from the streets via the granite gutter channels which are still a distinctive streetscape feature.

Seining for pilchards was carried out on an industrial scale in St Ives. Cyril Noall notes that from the beginning this fishery was monopolised by merchants who had the necessary capital to invest in the infrastructure required, were best qualified to handle marketing of the fish in overseas markets, and dispose of the industry's most valuable by-product, train-oil. As well as the domestic cellars the fishing companies had industrial-sized cellars from which they operated. Again most of these structures were located in the Down'long area, and their density is especially notable to the north of Back Road, facing onto Porthmeor Beach. These industrial scale cellars were generally large rectangular structures with a central courtyard open to the sky. The fish were processed on the cellar floor protected from the elements by penthouse roofs sloping into the open courtyard or by the projecting upper storey of net lofts where the nets and other equipment were stored. Appendix 2 shows the work of Dr John Ferguson in identifying fish cellars and the means used to press the fish as part of the curing process.

The majority of these industrial cellars have been converted beyond recognition or demolished. However, the scale and proportions of these cellars still shapes the character of this area of town and the buildings developed on their sites.

Surviving buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries show the prestige and prosperity of the town, its gentry and merchants; substantially built 17th century stone structures such as the reputed oldest house in Fish Street and The Sloop and the symmetrical facades of the gentrified town houses of the 18th centuries, such as Knill’s house in Fore...
Street and Halse’s house in Fern Lea Terrace.

The rise and development of Methodism is also documented by the surviving collection of non conformist chapels seen throughout the town. An early Chapel survives at the bottom of the Stennack, built in 1784 and used on a number of occasions by John Wesley during his visits to the town. The strongly teetotal faith of the fishing community is demonstrated by the number of chapels, mostly of 19th century date, in the Down’long and Fore Street area; the Teetotal Chapel, Royal Square, Primitive Methodist Chapel, Fore Street and the Bible Christians in St Peter’s Street.

‘Up’long’ - Mining and associated industries

Another important element of the town’s economy was mining. Mining provided considerable employment within the area and led to large scale changes in the surrounding landscape. In 1832 a new mining settlement was created 3km to the south west of St Ives named Halsetown after its creator James Halse, then MP for St Ives. Mining and its associated industries stimulated much trade (both import and export), through the harbour. Rope walks seen throughout the town on historic maps were as much for mining as fishing.

Various mines existed within the town itself but the more important ones were situated to the west of the settlement. Although there is now little visible evidence of this aspect of the town’s past, place names such as ‘Wheal Dream’ and subsidence problems related to Wheal Ayr serve as reminders. The most centrally situated mine was at Pedn Olva Point, its engine house close to the site of the present Pednolva Hotel. To the west end of Porthmeor beach is the site of the old copper mine of Carrack Dhu. Open cast workings are visible on the Island, with Battery Mine and Island Consols also recorded here. A small working at the eastern corner of Porthmeor Beach was known as Wheal Snuff. Wheal Dream was a mining venture between Porthgwidden Cove and the harbour and near Porthminster point is the site of a very old mine called Wheal Margery whose workings extended beneath the sea.

The most successful period for mining in the area was the first three quarters of the 19th century. However, it is probable that there was activity as far back as the prehistoric period. Tin streaming was undertaken on an organised scale from the medieval period onwards in several of the nearby valleys running down to the sea. Most important in this area were the workings along the Stennack valley but streaming also occurred at Primrose Valley, Porthminster.

It is likely that the Stennack valley has been substantially altered as a result of this working, with the stream itself obviously rerouted and now largely culverted and conduit. The length of the valley shows signs of the common disturbance normally resulting from this form of extraction, with irregular land parcels being taken from spent workings.
The Stennack area of town is traditionally known as ‘Up’long’ and just as ‘Down’long’ was historically associated with the fishing community this area was associated with the mining community, tradesmen, sea captains and the professional classes. The area’s historic built environment reflects its mining associations, with typical rows and cottages forming an important element of the townscape. Other rows have been lost through demolition associated with road widening schemes, such as a number of cottages shown on the tithe map of c1840 opposite Higher Stennack Cottages immediately north of the stream.

The stream was also used as a power source for dressing and smelting the ore. Stamping mills and blowing houses worked along the valley.

In some places the sides of the valley are overlain by the spoil tips of some of the mines, such as Wheal Trenwith to the south which mined copper ore, black tin and later, during the twentieth century, extracted uranium, mostly from the dumps. Wheal Ayr was situated opposite, on the northern side of the valley. Its engine house had been converted to residential use and survived until after the Second World War when it was demolished to make way for Wheal Ayr Terrace. However, a further building relating to the mine, possibly a count house or perhaps more likely a Captain’s house survives, although heavily altered. This structure is first seen on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of c1880.

Further from the town at the higher reaches of the valley was St Ives Consols, a large mine with a long and interesting history which employed several hundred people at its peak in the 1820s when it was Cornwall’s most important tin mine.

The impact mining money had on the town has not as yet been fully explored, but it probably funded much of the 19th century civic rebuilding of the town, for example at High Street, Tregenna Place and Tregenna Hill, and the boom in terrace development discussed below.
19th century harbour development

By the turn of the 19th century the town's maritime trade and economy had once again outgrown the harbour and proposals for its expansion and development were formulated. As early as 1811 ambitious plans for a massive 'harbour of refuge' were drawn up. In 1817 a rubble breakwater was constructed to the east of Smeaton's pier to provide further protection against the force of the Atlantic. This can still be seen as a bank of rocks. The 'harbour of refuge' plans were pushed again in 1824, but were never to be realised.

In 1837, after the cost of Smeaton's pier had been cleared, St Ives was declared a free port and dues ceased to be collected. Although making the harbour more attractive to trade, this loss of revenue delayed the possibility of further repairs and improvements due to a lack of capital.

In 1853 a new Act was obtained for erecting an additional pier, but this lapsed with no progress having been made in 1862. Finally in 1864 work began on an outer harbour with the construction of the 'New' or 'Wooden' pier that was to be 600 foot long and to run east from Castle Rock. However, the venture failed with the timber framework unable to withstand the buffeting of the north coast and work ceased in 1867. In less than twenty years, it was a complete wreck and survives today as a line of stones with a few broken piles extending seawards locally known as ‘the Rampers’. The failure of this scheme led to an acute crisis, with the harbour desperately overcrowded with an ever increasing fleet of fishing vessels. In 1886 fishermen rioted because of the situation (Tresidder's riot).

Between 1888 and 1890 Smeaton's pier was nearly doubled in length, from 98m to 183m. Timber piers of this 'Victorian Extension' were infilled with Portland.

The evolving harbour: the remains of the rubble breakwater deposited in 1817 is visible to the east of (below) the harbour arm, as is the remains of the timber pier begun in 1864. The changing alignment along the length of the harbour arm marks the original length of Smeaton’s pier and the ‘Victorian Extension’ of 1888-1890 which nearly doubled the length of the pier (CCC Historic Environment Service, ACS F69 (52), 2005).
cement and concrete blocks and faced with granite. It was fitted with a pier-end cast iron lighthouse made by Messers Stothert and Pitt Ltd of Bath.

Further measures to relieve the harbour of sand inundation were executed at this time following the blocking of the 18th century adit during the construction works relating to the 1860s ‘New Pier’. The three arches at the northern end of Smeaton’s Pier, often seen in paintings of the harbour area, were pierced at this date. However, the design proved too effective with boats being sucked through the openings by the force of tides and they were quickly blocked up.

Later, in 1894, the Western Pier was constructed as a loading jetty for road stone being extracted from the quarries at Carthew, off Orange Lane to the immediate west of the study area overlooking Porthmeor beach.

Wrecks and loss of life to the sea were common occurrences in the life of the town. In 1840 the St Ives lifeboat service was established and in 1859 the famous lighthouse on Godrevy Island was built.

The Hain family’s fleet of sailing ships was based at St Ives and eventually became the Hain Steamship Company, which was taken over by P&O in 1917 soon after Sir Edward Hain’s death. It continued to be administered from the town with all its vessels registered at St Ives despite them being too large to sail from its harbour. Many of the company’s sea captains found St Ives an attractive place to live; many of them settled in the fine houses of the Terrace or built houses of their own in Bowling Green, contributing to the prosperity of the town in the 1880s and 1890s.

The distinctive ‘three arches’, seen in much St Ives art, pierced through Smeaton’s Pier in the 1860s
(Photograph: Charles Winpenny, Cornwall CAM.)

Early and mid 19th century - Urbanisation and residential expansion

The town’s population increased rapidly in the early 19th century. Between 1821 (4797) and 1851 (8815) there was a regular increase in the population of over a thousand per decade and the numbers continued to rise into the later 19th century.

Development during the 19th century saw both the rebuilding, intensification of use and increasing urbanisation of its core and the rapid expansion of the town with the construction of residential terraces.

Within the town core there was much rebuilding. In 1832 the medieval market house was demolished and replaced with the present-day structure and the southern end of Fore Street was largely rebuilt with three storey overtly urban structures, only the former public house on the western side opposite the market house retaining the former smaller scale.

Tregenna Place and Tregenna Hill appear to be a set-piece speculative development, of early 19th or late 18th century date. The straight line of their urban form and the architectural unity in their buildings strongly suggest this. Prior to this development the area was known
as ‘The Green’, possibly indicating earlier use as the town’s fair field. The Stephens family had a substantial house here prior to the building of Tregenna Castle, which boasted uninterrupted sea views.

The town expanded from its medieval extent southwards along the shore and westwards up the Stennack valley (see Fig. 3). Initially the level terrain on the upper reaches of the sloping topography was developed, for example The Terrace, (development shown on the tithe map of c1840). Later terraced development occurred along the steeply sloping valley sides requiring extensive and expensive engineering works. As well as the terraced platforms cut and revetted from the valleysides impressive stepped footpaths were created linking these newly developed residential areas with the historic ‘old town’ below.

With this expansion, formerly rural hamlets, mining settlements and farmsteads were subsumed into the growing town. For example, Ayr to the west of the town was originally a rural hamlet with its own 17th century manor house. Higher Stennack, Porthminster, and Trenwith are other examples of former farming settlements.

Modernisation was also occurring with the gas works established above Porthmeor beach in 1835 and the town lit by gas from this date. In 1843 the town established its first piped water supply.

The rising population led to the need for more facilities; an additional cemetery was laid out at Barnoon in 1857 and between 1878 and 1881 a Board School was built on The Stennack. Designed by Silvanus Trevail, the plans for this school were exhibited at the 1878 Paris Exhibition and afterwards went to the International Exhibition held in Melbourne and Sydney, Australia.

The growth of non-conformism also had a noticeable effect on the townscape. Although there had been Quaker activity in town as early as 1656, when George Fox and others were arrested for distributing leaflets, St Ives had its first Methodist Society as early as 1743. At first members met in each other’s houses and premises, but in 1785 the first Wesleyan chapel was built in Street-an-Garrow. During the 19th century with the development of various branches of non-conformism and the rising population the number of chapels within the town proliferated.

The terraces seem to have been constructed for the growing middle-classes of the town, suggesting that the money being made in local mining, fishing and trading was being invested within the settlement.

Interestingly as well as the development on the higher slopes there was also an
area of terraced residential development to the north of Back Lane East, of late 18th to early 19th century date. The gridded development of Teetotal Street, St Eia Street and Carncrows Street was imposed on the topography here and stands in sharp contrast to the organic form of much of the rest of the residential development in this area. The house type was still the adapted fish cellar house but these were grand houses of large scale with architectural ornamentation, a testament to the affluence of the fishing community during this period.

As well as the terraces the area of expansion also included some large detached properties such as the classically inspired Eden House on The Stennack built early-mid 19th century. Talland House, Albert Road, is another example, overlooking Porthminster; here Virginia Woolf’s family spent their summer months and she famously wrote ‘To the lighthouse’, immortalising Godrevy Lighthouse.

In addition to the needs of the local population, it therefore seems likely that the residential terraces and detached villas were also responding to the demand of early, wealthy visitors to the town who ‘took’ houses for the season, or who lodged with local families. In 1868 Lake commented:

‘The position of the town of S. Ives is very pleasant and most salubrious; and the spirit of improvement has shown itself in the most unquestionable manner. A better class of houses has been built; and two or three tastefully designed and well-situated terraces have latterly been added to the requirements of the town as an agreeable watering place’.

Late 19th century - Railway resort and civic rebuilding

By the mid to late 19th century the traditional main-stays of the town’s economy were in decline (although both maintained some activity into the 20th century). Fishing and mining were both becoming less profitable as the diminishing pilchard shoals were diverted from the seiners’ reach by new drifters and as tin and copper both suffered under the pressure from foreign competition. Their decline affected the numerous associated industries and trades practiced within the town. As a result the population growth reversed and a period of emigration is seen in the census totals between 1871 (9143) and 1931 (8159).

A coastal gun battery with a small defended barracks was established in 1860 as part of a widespread coastal defence scheme developed against a possible French invasion. The Battery was operational until 1895 and the guns were finally removed in 1909.

In 1877 a branch railway line was built to St Erth, connecting with the main Penzance-Paddington line. This opened up communication with the rest of the country including distant new markets and increased possibilities for the fishing trade. London markets were now a significant factor in the harbour economy of the town.

As well as the export potential the arrival of the railway brought greater numbers of that still relatively new import to the town – tourists. Lured by the beautiful beaches, healthy sea air, rugged surrounding scenery and temperate climate, visitors to the town were to have a major impact on its character, economy and built environment. With this influx of guests came the need for grand hotels, shops and entertainments.

Tregenna Castle, originally built in 1774 for John Stephens and designed by John
Wood of Bath, was leased in 1878 to the Great Western Railway and opened as a hotel. Porthminster Hotel, opened a little later in 1894.

The beaches, previously places of work, with seines, gigs, luggers and other vessels, nets, kits (cane baskets used to land the fish from the boats to shore), carts and the stench of the landed fish became playgrounds for visitors with the new craze for sea bathing making bathing machines, huts and deck chairs the new equipment required.

A late 19th century building boom changed the character of the town substantially. The residential development of terraces across the steep sides of the Stennack valley and beyond continued during the 1880s with many being established as guesthouses. It is notable that just as these terraces and villas were being constructed the resident population of the town was declining. This possibly indicates a reduction in the size of households and the effects of slum clearance being undertaken in the old town in the densely populated courts. It also reflects the fact that many of these new houses were built for summer letting and guesthouses and provided accommodation for visitors rather than the local population.

Within the town centre a new civic focus was created around High Street and Tregenna Place. Here large institutional buildings were erected such as the impressive bank buildings and the Passmore Edwards library. Buildings along Tregenna Place and Hill originally built as residences were converted into shops and commercial premises responding to the influx of tourists and residents. St Ives had a new commercial focus.

**Artist colony**

With the tourists came the artists, attracted by the quality of the light, the dramatic scenery of the townscape and its surrounding landscape. They were to bring St Ives international fame as a world renowned artists’ colony. Turner had visited in 1811, but it was not until seventy years later when artists Whistler and Walter Sickert over-wintered in the town in 1884 that the colony was founded. By the end of the 1880s the town had become the permanent residence for a number of artists attracted by the light, the subject matter and the relatively cheap cost of living. English painters brought to St Ives the outdoor 'plein air' style of painting that they had learnt in France. The first gallery for exhibitions was Lanham’s opened in
1887, and the St Ives Artists Club (now the St Ives Arts Club) originates from this period.

By 1896 the Badcock guide and history of the town was able to proclaim that: St Ives

‘now undoubtedly ranks as the premier watering place and resort in Cornwall. Although it has made such rapid strides during late years in the direction of improved sanitation and the erection of large numbers of first-class residential villas, the older part of the town has lost none of that picturesque quaintness and irregularity of outline so sacred to the artist. The popularity of St Ives, from an artistic point of view, appears to be on the increase, inasmuch as the number of the Art Colony are being annually augmented’.

It was the St Ives Modernist Period which brought the town international recognition. The meeting of Alfred Wallis, Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood in 1928 sowed the seed. With the outbreak of war in 1939, Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Naum Gabo settled in St Ives and established in West Cornwall an outpost for the abstract avant-garde. Their Penwith Society of Arts, established in 1949, encouraged modernist concepts, sculptors and craftsmen and women.

After the war a new generation of artists emerged, including Peter Lanyon, John Lanyon, John Wells, Roger Hilton, Bryan Wynter, Patrick Heron, Terry Frost and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham.

The artists recorded in their work the character of the town during the decline of the fishing economy. But they also went some way towards preserving the physical fabric of the fishing industry. Looking for cheap lodgings and studio space, they often lived with fishing families and later moved into disused fish cellars, saving for some period the built fabric and build type. Elsewhere cellars were being demolished wholesale, as in other Cornish fishing settlements (see Appendix 2).

As well as painting, the town also attracted other artistic ventures including fine ceramics established in the 1920s by Bernard Leach with Shoji Hamada in workshops on the Stennack which survive today. Crysele, the textile art manufactory, also operated from the town after the company’s 1925 move from Newlyn to a former fish cellar on the Island (today St Nicholas’s Court). Specialising in fine hand-block printed silks, many of Alec Walker’s spectacular semi-abstract designs were inspired by the surrounding landscape. The company had shops throughout Britain and mail order customers world wide.

**20th century**

The early 20th century saw continued decline of fishing and the end of the mining economy of the town, but also
saw continued growth and intensification of the tourist economy.

Wharf Road was built in 1922 as a relief road to Fore Street, dramatically changing the nature of the harbour, which had previously only been reached from Fore Street by narrow ope ways.

Residential expansion continued through construction of local authority housing estates and private closes, cul-de-sacs and bungalow development to the south and west of the historic settlement.

St Ives was not involved significantly in the preparation for D Day in World War Two. The town, however, was quite heavily defended both in its own right and also as part of the wider defences of Hayle. The defences were of two types – anti invasion defences and anti aircraft defences.

Whilst the anti aircraft defences were sited well outside the town, the anti invasion defences can still be found in and around the town. The St Ives Emergency Coastal Battery consisting of two guns was sited at Porthminster Point adjacent to the railway and some elements still survive. This battery operated in conjunction with another at Godrevy to the east across St Ives Bay.

Scattered along the coast and within the town are pill boxes to defend both the harbour, the beaches and the coastal battery. Several pillboxes survive and these deserve to be preserved, conserved and interpreted. A plaque close to the start of Smeaton’s Pier commemorates the many Marine Commandos who stayed in St Ives whilst undergoing climbing training on the Zennor cliffs at Bosigran.

The replacement of the original Drill Hall in St Ives was constructed in 1938 on Alexandra Road. Whilst outside the area of study it is worth noting that the use of a revolutionary German geodesic construction makes this building of national importance. It deserves to be listed.

The presence and influence of the artists and the wider cultural industries continued to shape the development of the town with the redevelopment of the town’s former gas works site as Tate St Ives. Opening in 1993 this striking and award winning building designed by Evans and Shalev, looks out over the magnificent Porthmeor beach and celebrates the town’s historic artistic links and showcases modern art in a Cornish context. It has had a dramatic effect on the town carving out a niche in the cultural tourism of the county and raising the profile of the town at a national level. It has attracted a new type of visitor to the town and encouraged the development of high quality cafes, bars and restaurants and design-led boutique-type shops.

Into the 21st century

The town retains much of its distinctive character. A small fishing fleet still works out of the harbour. Pleasure boating, fishing trips and a wide range of water sports have become another source of income.

The thriving tourism industry has had a marked effect. Many of the town’s residences are holiday or second homes, especially the cottages around and close-by the harbour and beaches. But St Ives retains a strong sense of community.

The Tate St Ives is a key reason for the settlement’s popularity and success. It has branded the town as a centre of art and culture, a place of quality, history and character. The town continues to have a thriving art scene with many studios, galleries and events highly visible throughout the town.

It is perhaps one of the most successful Cornish towns and one that knows well how to capitalise on its historic character and interesting past to ensure its own successful future.
4 Archaeological potential

St Ives archaeological record (fig. 6)

The varied historic development of St Ives is likely to have created a rich archaeological record. Its evolution has shaped today’s town: its roads, lanes and opes, the harbour, the grain of the built environment, building plots, historic structures and open spaces. St Ives’ archaeological record includes all these visible manifestations of the settlement's past as well as the hidden, buried remains.

Archaeology is potentially a rich asset for the town. There is much about the settlement’s history which is obscure and archaeology is almost certainly the only way in which certain key aspects of its historic development and character can be better understood. Archaeology can also make a significant contribution in cultural and economic terms: remains of the past have important potential for education, tourism and leisure, as well as a role in maintaining local pride, sense of place and belonging.

St Ives’ archaeological significance

St Ives’ archaeological record is likely to contain information relating to a vast array of past activities. As with any historic settlement, evidence of its origins, subsequent growth, periods of stagnation, trade and commerce, manufacture and the everyday life of its inhabitants are all topics that can be elucidated through archaeological investigation. Below are some of the key aspects of St Ives’ archaeological significance.

Early settlements

Evidence suggests that the surrounding landscape was densely occupied during the prehistoric period. Prehistoric monuments survive in relatively high numbers in the surrounding landscape, as do internationally important prehistoric field systems.

Field and place name evidence suggest a number of probable Iron Age and Romano-British defended ‘round’ sites close to the town, such as to the north of Alexandra Road and at Trenwith Lane. A number of Iron Age subterranean ‘fogou’ structures are also suggested by the placename element ‘Vow’, for example at Tregenna – Old and New Vow Cottages and at Hellesvean where the tithe map records the field name ‘Stratton Vow’.

It is likely that prehistoric settlements and sites spread across the area that is now the town of St Ives and there is, therefore, potential for prehistoric archaeological remains to survive and be exposed during development works. The historic names for the Island feature the element ‘Dinas’ suggesting that it is the site of an Iron Age cliff castle. Possible prehistoric roundhouses have been recorded at Ayr and Carrick Du.

Further chance finds of prehistoric objects such as flint scatters, stone axes and rotary querns provide incidental evidence of early occupation and use of the landscape.

The tre element in the names of other areas of the town indicate the centres of early medieval farm estates, such as at Trenwith, Tregenna and Treloyhan.

Medieval

Figure 6 shows the likely extent of medieval St Ives. There is significant potential for survival of below-ground remains of sequences of buildings along street frontages and around the harbour.
and Island isthmus. The substantial sand inundations of the 16th century may have sealed, and so protected, archaeological deposits earlier than this date. The higher alkalinity of sand may mean that preservation of features would be good.

Evidence for the extent of the original medieval market place may be recoverable in the southern end of Fore Street. Many of the roads currently in use have medieval and earlier origins.

There are references to a number of medieval chapels in the town. St Nicholas's has been substantially rebuilt after extensive use as part of the defensive works on the Island (see below). The building now known as St Leonard's stands on the 18th century Smeaton's pier and therefore cannot be of medieval date. It is likely that the original chapel stood close to the medieval pier and that when the new pier was constructed a new chapel was also built. A rent roll in 1816 suggests that St Luke’s had been converted to a dwelling house and its exact location in the Dinas area is no longer known.

The town corn mill was located on the Stennack stream in the 19th century but is likely to have existed on the same site from a much earlier date.

Later expansion of the town was laid out over green field sites and there is potential for evidence relating to earlier landscapes. For example the pattern of a medieval strip field system has been fossilised in the later line of residential terraces to the west of Fore Street. The area later to become Tregenna Place was earlier known as ‘Green Court’ and it is likely to have been the site of the town’s medieval fair field. The town’s playing place – ‘plain an gwarry’ – is said to have been located about half way along the Stennack in a field named ‘Little-in-sight’ on the tithe map.

Early post-medieval rural settlement focal points are also areas of specific archaeological potential in the town. For example at Ayr is an impressive and important 17th century ‘manor house’. At Hick’s Court a granite archway has been reused and chamfered granite lintels are to be found in the windows of a property on nearby Virgin Street. It is possible that they were once part of the same prestigious house somewhere in the vicinity reputed to have been the 17th century mansion of the Hick’s family.

Maritime

Archaeological investigation may provide further evidence of the evolution of fishing and maritime trading of St Ives. Obviously the harbour and areas around the beaches are most likely to hold this kind of evidence.

In the harbour there is potential for remains of piers, quays and breakwaters. The remains of the abortive early 19th century attempt to build a pier to the east of Smeaton’s pier are still visible at low tide and it is possible that something remains of the medieval quay in the vicinity of Carnglaze Place.

Along the coastline there is potential for other quay sites. For example Westcott’s Quay to the south, now obscured by the 20th century Pednolva Walk, was originally open to the sea. Remains of its granite ashlar facing are visible in the surfacing in the courtyard defined by former industrial structures.
The town’s tremendous pilchard seining history has left traces in the archaeological record, including standing and buried remains of fish cellars and courts, the baulking house and huer’s hut at Porthminster, and other ancillary industries connected to it. Networks, sail lofts, blacksmiths and smokehouses, boat building yards, saw mill and saw pit sites either survive or have their sites known.

There is also significant archaeological potential in foreshore and intertidal structures and perhaps also in palaeoenvironmental deposits.

Numerous wreck sites are known to lie around the bay. There could be remains from smuggling activity, just as there is of the coastguard system, with the coastguard cottages and lookout at Porthminster. There may be evidence on the Island of the early lighthouse or pharos recorded by Leland.

**Mining**

The past importance of mining in the district is less visible in terms of surviving monuments and structures but has had a significant impact on the development and form of the townscape. Past activity is well recorded in the archaeological record with potential for evidence of mine sites, shafts, engine houses, dressing floors and other structures within the town, as well as tin streaming, dumps and waste in the Stennack valley.

**Defence**

From the defended Iron Age cliff castle to Second World War pill boxes, St Ives has archaeological potential relating to defence. Its prominent location overlooking a sheltered bay, on the otherwise perilous north coast, has made it an obvious landing place and left it exposed to attack.

Medieval fortifications and defence measures are known of on the Island and close to the medieval quay. A fortification known as the ‘Bulwarks’ is still visible at the crest of the Island. The system of ramparts and two bastions are first mentioned in 1535 and defended a gun placement. ‘The Castle’, a blockhouse dated to 1490, located close by the medieval quay appears to survive in part, built into a later property.

The town was actively defended during the Civil War when, unusually in Cornwall, the town sided with the Parliamentarians. There may be archaeological evidence of this period of use on the Island (where breastworks survive on the northern and western sides) and other defensive sites, such as the Malakoff.

The American War of Independence and the Napoleonic war were other periods when the defence levels of the town were increased as part of national campaigns to protect Great Britain.

Measures continued in the late 19th century with a three gun coastal battery commissioned in 1860 constructed on the eastern side of the Island. It was retired in 1895, the guns removed in 1909, and is now the site of the Coastguard Lookout Station.

St Ives was a strategic part of the first and Second World War defences. In the last war the battery site on the Island was equipped with anti-aircraft Lewis guns.

**St Ives’ archaeological potential**

While the above identifies the potential, St Ives’ archaeology is as yet a largely unknown resource as very few archaeological interventions (excavations, watching briefs, evaluations, etc) have been undertaken within the historic core of the town (Fig 6). Those that have been recorded in the HER are as follows.

- An archaeological evaluation and building recording was carried out at the former Couch’s Factory, The
• An archaeological assessment was carried out for the St Ives Flood Defence Scheme in 2003 by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit.

• Research by John Ferguson into the town’s fish cellars and their pressing methods (as shown in Appendix 2)

A little further afield, the following archaeological work is known.

• An archaeological assessment of Porthminster Point was carried out in 1993 by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit. This identified archaeological sites and made management recommendations.

• Geotechnical investigation, shaft inspection, field observation and a site survey was carried out at Bank’s Shaft and surrounding area, Higher Stennack and Wheal Ayr by Geocom and reported on in April 2001.

Future investigations and surveys are likely to add to a better understanding of the historic development, character and archaeological potential of St Ives.

It should be emphasised that ‘archaeology’ does not refer solely to buried remains. Information on the historical sequences embodied in standing buildings and other ‘above ground’ features could be extremely valuable and a building survey of the town would be likely to yield significant new information.

Opportunities for investigation and recording should be sought when buildings are refurbished or undergo substantial alteration. Figure 5 indicates the survival of historic fabric and buildings which offer potential for archaeological investigation. As well as showing all the Listed Buildings in the primary study area this figure also shows other Historic Buildings that, for these purposes, are defined as surviving buildings shown on the second edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of c1907.

Standing buildings often incorporate surviving elements of earlier fabric. For example, some standing buildings, such as 75 Fore Street, are likely to have been re-fronted in the past and may incorporate evidence of structures significantly earlier than their apparent date.

The detailed borough accounts have already yielded much information about life in the town from 1570 to c1832 (see Matthews, 1892) and future documentary research is likely to yield valuable data. This area of study, together with participation in a building survey of the town, could provide a challenging and worthwhile avenue for involvement by local people wishing to investigate aspects of their heritage.

Archaeological remains are an important and non-renewable resource and as such are protected by national legislation and local planning policy. One component of future investigation of both buried archaeological remains and standing buildings may be through more extensive targeted implementation of PPG15 and PPG16 as part of the development control process.

In order for this development-based investigation to have maximum effect a research strategy for the town should be developed, providing a framework of research questions for investigators to be guided by and attempt to answer. This report goes some way to shaping such a strategy.

Archaeological research also has scope for community based projects with non-destructive investigations and surveys likely to yield much of interest.
Indicators of archaeological potential

Figure 6 indicates the potential extent of certain aspects of the buried archaeological remains of St Ives, although it must be emphasised that this depiction of potential is indicative, not definitive, and future archaeological investigation and research will test and refine its value.

An understanding of the potential is broadly derived from the historic extent of the settlement itself. In simple terms, any location within the area developed up to the early 20th century (as represented on the 2nd edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of c.1907) is regarded as having the potential for standing or buried archaeological features. The historic core of the settlement is of particular archaeological interest and sensitivity in that deposits are likely to provide valuable information on its early form and development. Urban archaeological remains are likely to be more complex in these areas.

The figure also identifies a number of sites and areas of known historic significance: i.e., those places where the presence of a significant structure or feature has been demonstrated by archaeological investigation or can be identified from historic maps or documentary sources but does not now survive above ground (for example, the numerous fish cellars in Down’long). Points are used to approximately locate features where the available sources are not adequate to pinpoint a specific location (for example, the site of St Luke’s Chapel, referred to as ‘in Dennis’ taken to refer to Dinas and the Island area).

It should be noted that there is also a proven potential within the area for the survival of archaeological remains that pre-date or are unrelated to the development of the town. In the absence of specific information such as reports of finds or antiquarian references the potential presence of such sites is difficult to predict.
5 Statement of significance, St Ives

St Ives’ dramatic topography of glittering seascape, bleached white beaches, Island promontory and deep Stennack valley produce some of the most stunning urban views in Cornwall. From the upper car parks almost the entire town is seen: regimented tiers of terraces on the Stennack valley sides point to the town centre where the curving harbour is protected by the rising Island and overlooked by the 15th century church.

Essential St Ives: The Island, harbour and church

The famous St Ives light has drawn artists from all over the world for the last 120 years. The cleanness and crispness of colour make the town luminous and bright even in dull conditions and the mild climate adds to the ambience, allowing exotic palms and succulents to thrive away from harsh chills. However, wild storms bring ferocious wind and waves driving and crashing against foreshore buildings. It is in the harbour that ‘the light’ is most apparent, making sands and sea sparkle. Here too the tide turns quickly, draining and filling like the very heart beat of the settlement.

Although the harbour is indeed widely perceived as the town’s heart, St Ives is much more complex than a simple fishing town. Great historic interest exists in all its several areas: the medieval market place by the church; Fore Street, the town’s medieval commercial street with its surviving 17th and 18th century buildings; Victorian civic development around High Street and Tregenna Place and the hotel and railway town to their south; miners’ cottages in the Stennack Valley. Proximity to the ancient Penwith landscapes, with their famous prehistoric monuments, adds to St Ives’ specialness.
The fine-grained detail, variety and quality of textures are a delight in the streetscape: the dense maze of cobbled streets covering the isthmus connecting the Island with the ‘mainland’; the occasional rocky outcrops seen in the network of alleyways and pathways running between the courts and roadless streets; the stepped paths connecting the old town with residential terraces on the slopes above; the robustness of the massed granite buildings; the golden lichen clinging to the grey slate roofs; and the witty house-names and imaginative house signs and door furniture seen throughout St Ives. All add to its enjoyment, its distinctiveness and sense of place.

The picturesque harbour still supports a small fishing fleet and St Ives is now also a successful tourist town that provides family and cultural holidays bolstered by Tate St Ives, one of the three biggest tourist attractions in Cornwall. Tourism is another rhythm in the town; although the season has extended there remains an ebbing and flowing of the crowds.

The interest found throughout St Ives should be reflected in how the town is treated and presented. All is important and of value so the temptation to ‘cherry pick’ to the detriment of certain areas should be resisted.
6 Present settlement character

St Ives has long been recognised as a special place of outstanding character, beauty and quality. This 'specialness' is largely based on its built heritage, natural setting and historic associations.

Much of the town’s distinctive character derives from the variety of roles it has played in its history. It has been a fishing and trading port, a haven for shipping, a market and service centre, a place of maritime and other industry, a seaside resort and home to an internationally influential artist colony. Traces of all these functions are strongly evident in its topography, surviving buildings, streetscapes and vibrant character and charm.

Today, St Ives functions as both an internationally popular destination for visitors and a local centre in its own right. Penzance is the primary shopping centre in the district while St Ives offers a commercial core with predominantly small independent traders. Much of the town’s commercial activity is geared towards tourism with a recent growth in the range of arts and crafts outlets and design-based boutiques.

A popular holiday and day trip destination, the town offers a wide choice of entertainment facilities and attractions, most notably the beaches, but now also the Tate Gallery. There is a significant amount of holiday accommodation, including camping and caravan parks at its edges, bed and breakfast guesthouses, hotels and self-catering holiday homes. Although the season has been extended, there are still marked changes throughout the year, which change the character of the settlement. Seasonal closure of shops, galleries and attractions has reduced but is still a feature of the town, especially in the more tourist orientated areas and markets, especially around the beaches.

The balance between visitors and residents is a central issue within the town and is one of the forces of change affecting the character of the settlement. A degree of zoning of these different groups has developed that affects the way different areas are perceived and how the town works as a whole.

Topography and settlement form

One of the major assets of St Ives town is its close relationship with its spectacular natural setting, the harbour, beaches, headlands such as the Island and the coastline of the wider bay.

The close relationship with the special natural setting is important in the character of St Ives
The dramatic underlying topography has influenced the development of the town and provides much of its interest. The rising form of the Island connected to the mainland by the tapering isthmus, and the deep Stennack valley lined with 19th century tiered terraces are both distinctive elements of the townscape.

The earliest (prehistoric) settlement activity concentrated on the easily defended Island; the southern side of the isthmus would have been recognised early on as a sheltered area in which to land boats; and the relatively level coastal plain skirting the harbour provided the easiest terrain on which to lay out the medieval planted town.

Later development spread from this core area. The isthmus was increasingly developed by the fishing community as the place where they both lived and worked while the Stennack Valley became the focus of industry: tin streaming and mining, later being intensively developed with 19th century terraces. Southwards the coastal slope above Porthminster Beach was developed as an exclusive suburb and as part of the tourist resort.

The engineering required for some of this development is an impressive achievement in its own right and adds to the robust character of the town.

The steep terrain provides extensive views over town and sea throughout the settlement. The high visibility means that changes often have townwide implications.

Much of the urban topography of the town is characterised by tight, narrow and curving streets set against steep hills. Late 19th century expansions tend to be more linear and so are easily identified, such as the Stennack terraces.

**Standing historic fabric**

**Survival**

St Ives contains a notable concentration of listed buildings and many others that deserve such recognition and protection. The general levels of survival and condition of historic buildings is good and forms a major asset for the town.
In contrast to some other Cornish towns there are notable and important 17th century buildings, such as the Sloop and what is reputed to be the oldest house in town on Fish Street.

Eighteenth century dwellings also survive well with impressive architecturally refined town houses in Fore Street and surrounding area and other less grand houses in the Down'long area, the Stennack and elsewhere.

Building types include those relating to the fishing industry: the important domestic fish cellars of the Down'long area, the industrial fish cellars and the harbour structures. However, this category of building has also seen many losses. Many cellars, smokehouses, barking houses, net factories and sail lofts have gone and many others have been significantly altered through insensitive conversion.

Built evidence of the mining industry is also all but lost, with miners’ cottages along the Stennack being one of the few surviving elements of this important industry.

The Housing Acts of 1925 and 1930 ordered the demolition of a number of houses in the town under Slum Clearance Orders. As a result Pudding Bag Lane was completely demolished in 1936 and replaced by the town’s first car park adjacent to the Sloop Inn. Other houses were demolished in Virgin Street, Church Lane and Westcott’s Quay, despite strong local opposition. Many houses in the Digey and Chapel Street might also have been demolished in the next Clearance two years later, but World War Two intervened and no further action was taken.

A major fire in 1970 cut a swathe through the historic buildings in the region of Court Cocking (the stepped ope linking Fore Street with the harbour). The destruction stretched from Wharf Road to the far side of Fore Street. Fortunately the replacement buildings are generally sympathetic to their surroundings.

**Architecture, materials and detail**

The majority of structures in the town are stone-built with granite ashlar featuring in most high status structures and coursed rubble with dressed granite detail being predominant materials in other buildings. Early structures feature a slatey stone used in thin, small pieces laid in courses which may be the local bedrock that outcrops extensively along the coastline and the neck of the Island. Other local stone is a dolerite greenstone quarried locally and blue elvan, seen as the ‘beach bowlies’ (sea worn stones) recovered from the shore line; a very hard stone traditionally used for quoins, fenders and keystones.

Slate-hung walls are also seen throughout the town, and are likely to have been once more common. Other surface finishes seen throughout the town are pebble-dashed render with ornate applied plaster decoration and plain painted render. Brick is rare but is seen painted in a number of buildings within the town.

Often of three storeys, most of the town’s architecture is distinctively urban, set in very dense concentrations.

Grey Cornish slate is almost universal in the important roofscapes of the town, so visible because of the dramatic topography and steeply sloping streets. The town boasts one of the best surviving traditional roofscapes in any Cornish town. The scantle slate is traditionally wet laid and is notably stained with golden lichen growth. Brick chimney stacks, red ceramic ridge tiles and red and white terracotta pots and pyramid flue-covering slates are also common skyline features, adding colour and detail.

Architectural detailing enriches most areas of the townscape: the decorative stair railings of the Down'long cellars; the ornate barge boards and projecting bays...
of the 19th century terraces; the elaborate
carved granite ornamentation of the 19th
century town core; and the surviving
traditional shop fronts along Fore Street
and in the 19th century town centre.

There is an important group of buildings
by the Cornish architect Silvanus Trevail
including the former private residence
now hotel Treloyhan Manor, the
Passmore Edwards library, and the
landmark former Stennack School.

There is a good group of non conformist
chapels surviving throughout the town
forming a reminder of the importance of
Methodism in the town and its
communities. An early Methodist Chapel
at the bottom of the Stennack was built
in 1784 and used by John Wesley on
several occasions. No longer a place of
worship, it is now used by Kidz r Us as a
theatre. Elsewhere there are a number of
other chapels which served the fishing
community with their very strong teetotal
approach including the Teetotal Chapel
in Royal Square, the Primitive Methodist
Chapel in Fore Street and the Bible
Christians in St Peter’s Street.

Importantly the town also includes a
number of outstanding 20th century
buildings including the iconic Tate St
Ives and Lifeboat house. These buildings
provide excellent exemplars for how to
achieve successful modern structures in
sensitive historic areas.

The skyline of the town is an important
and distinctive feature following the
underlying topography and featuring
turrets, cupolas, acute gable ends, hipped
and half hipped roofs, chimney stacks all
accentuating the vertical and reaching for
the sky.

Throughout the town buildings are
vulnerable to incremental loss of detail
and therefore character. Insensitive
conversions, especially within the
harbour area have done much to erode
the distinctive character of the town, as
have piecemeal alterations, removals and
accretions.

Roofscapes are a very important aspect of
the town’s character, highly visible and
unified by the almost universal use of silver
grey Cornish slate, softened by the golden
lichens which cover the slopes

Ornate railings to external stairs are a
feature of the late 19th century domestic fish
cellar houses in Down’long

Streetscape

The richness and quality of detail in the
streetscapes of St Ives is a defining
characteristic of the town. Such details, as
introduced below, produce a townscape
rich in texture, fine detail, colour,
humour and vitality.

• Surviving traditional street surfaces
  Many good examples survive
throughout the town, for example the granite blocks along Fore Street and the Wharf, the cobbled of Carnglaze Place, Bailey’s Lane and Bunkers Hill, and the cobbled street and granite steps on Bethesda Hill.

Two distinct types of granite are visible. The brown buff-coloured granite is the local moorstone, patched and repaired subsequently with light grey quarried granite.

Some areas of this important surfacing are protected and recognised by listing, but others are not officially recognised or catalogued and are therefore at threat of loss.

This surfacing adds a ‘specialness’ to the town, giving it charm, linking it to its local geology and adding to the variety of textures in the streetscape.

• Impressive granite kerbs and paving slabs are also a feature throughout the town emphasising the quality of the built environment.

• Drainage channels, gullies, shutes and conduits run along roads, stepped streets and narrow opeways. Some are cut from granite, others from slate. These waterways quickly fill during rain, gushing and draining water down to the sea from the steeply sloping town.

• ‘Glinter posts’, ‘spur stones’ or buffer stones are a common feature built into houses and are especially common at corners and junctions. These projecting stones are designed to prevent vehicles from damaging walls and were required because of the narrowness of the roads and alleys.

• The town retains a distinctly ‘seaside’ ambience. Although the smell of fish is no longer all-pervasive, the constant sea views, boating activity and squalling of gulls are a constant reminder of location.

Granite glinter posts, surfacing, gutter channels and kerb stones add texture colour and fine detail and interest to the streetscape.

The town retains a working ‘seaside’ ambience.

• Parks, gardens and the Island’s open ground are important green elements of the townscape. Planting throughout the town is an important feature with Cornish palms, succulents and other exotics providing a sub-tropical, almost Mediterranean character, also felt at the spectacular beaches, especially Porthminster.

There is a distinct and important green wedge within the townscape on the slopes of the Stennack Valley that divides the lower town and the old
town from the upper slopes and terraces.

- The town also contains a number of important public works of art such as the group of Hepworth sculptures.

Landmarks and views

The town is full of spectacular, breathtaking panoramas and snatched glimpses of both townscape views, enlivened by the dramatic underlying topography, and seascapes within the wider bay.

The form of the town in such views is very important. Its distinctive curves and sweeps are immediately recognizable, pleasing and seem at one with the surrounding and underlying environment – the town being very much linked to its location and natural setting.

Landmark features are numerous and include:

- The beaches and harbour
- the church tower
- the market house
- the two lighthouses of the pier
- the Godrevy lighthouse across the bay
- the Island topped by the chapel of St Nicholas
- Tregenna Castle and its mature estate trees
- Tate St Ives
- and the distant Knill’s monument
Identifying Character Areas

Understanding character

The CSUS investigation, in addition to identifying the broad elements of settlement character that define St Ives as a whole, identified six distinct Character Areas within the town’s historic (pre-1907) urban extent (see Section 8, below; Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheets 1-6).

1. Medieval commercial core – the Church, Market Place and Fore Street
2. 19th century town centre
3. The harbour
4. Down’long
5. The terraces
6. Coastal suburb and railway resort

These Character Areas are differentiated from each other by their varied historic origins, functions and resultant urban topography, by the processes of change which have affected each subsequently (indicated, for example, by the relative completeness of historic fabric, or significant changes in use and status), and the extent to which these elements and processes are evident in the current townscape. In simple terms, each Character Area may be said to have its own individual ‘biography’ which has determined its present character.

Taken with the assessment of overall settlement character, the six Character Areas offer a means of understanding the past and the present. In turn, that understanding provides the basis for a positive approach to planning future change which will maintain and reinforce the historic character and individuality of each area and the town as a whole - sustainable local distinctiveness.
7 Regeneration and management

The unique and special character and quality historic environment of St Ives is already recognised nationally and internationally. St Ives is among the most successful of Cornwall’s towns and although not Penwith’s largest settlement, it is one of the main draws to the district.

Its natural and historic environment, historic associations and contemporary cultural vibrancy are key factors in why people choose to live and visit here, why the place is so cherished and valued. They are central to what makes St Ives a wonderful place. The enhancement and preservation of these factors is therefore crucial to the future success of the town.

Characterising the historic environment of St Ives has produced an understanding of its historic fabric, archaeological potential and townscape character. This, together with supporting data can be used as a conventional conservation and planning tool to define constraints, as a yardstick against which to measure new development and policy proposals, and as the basis of well founded conservation management, restoration and enhancement schemes and policies.

More importantly, however, characterisation also reveals the essential dynamic factors underpinning the character of St Ives. Regeneration planning which is informed and inspired by these elements can take a much more sure-footed and proactive approach to creating beneficial change, both reinforcing and enhancing existing character and ensuring that new developments are better integrated into the existing urban framework, more focused and ultimately more successful.

Character-based principles for regeneration

These principles have been derived directly from the analysis of the character areas and should underpin all regeneration initiatives in St Ives:

- Respect and safeguard the fundamental importance of the natural setting and physical topography to the character of St Ives, particularly the sloping townscape, highly visible urban skyline, and the views to the harbour and out across St Ives’s Bay.

- Recognise the superior quality and particular distinctive character of the historic built environment of St Ives, and achieve equally high quality and distinctiveness in all future new build and the public realm.

- Recognise the importance of individual components of character and distinctiveness seen throughout the historic environment and conserve and enhance these. They include the fine grain elements which provide such a richness of texture, colour and detail throughout the town: street surfacing, gutter channels, granite glinter stones, iron railing details, house names, signs and door furniture, etc.

- Reinstate character and quality in the built environment, public realm and key open spaces where it has been eroded by inappropriate past interventions.

- Respect the different Character Areas within the town and acknowledge and reinforce the urban hierarchy and diversity they represent.

- Present, interpret and promote St Ives as an historic Cornish town of quality, character and significance.
Regeneration and the historic environment: key themes and issues

The high quality and diverse historic environment of St Ives is the basis of its world-renowned character and sense of place. Positive conservation management of this important asset will help secure the future success of the town. Strong management of the public realm offers substantial opportunities for townscape enhancement. It is also important that the town is treated as a whole in terms of townscape quality. Cherry-picking will create an unbalanced place; an holistic approach is recommended.

Characterisation has highlighted the following regeneration and conservation opportunities for the whole of historic St Ives and for specific areas and sites.

Understand, conserve and positively manage the historic environment asset

The distinctive character and cherished ‘specialness’ of St Ives are based on its setting and the quality and diversity of its historic components. To promote future success it is in the town’s economic, social and cultural interests to understand, protect and enhance the historic environment through strong and positive conservation management.

To be successful, any regeneration scheme or development proposal, should take full account of the historic environment.

Appropriate designations and management policies should be put in place at an early stage. This will benefit regeneration by giving certainty to the planning and development process. It also offers links to the priorities of funding programmes, especially Objective One’s requirements for enhancing local distinctiveness and respecting the cultural and historic resource.

Re-evaluating designations and the information base as part of this process might include:

- A review of the statutory list of historic buildings.

St Ives currently has a large number of Listed Buildings (298), but there are others that are of architectural or historic interest and might be considered for listing protection. Of particular importance are the possible remains of the ‘Castle’, a fifteenth century blockhouse in the harbour.

Whilst increased designation is sometimes perceived as a constraint against regeneration, it should instead be seen as confirmation of a building’s interest and value, and it can also provide important opportunities to draw down additional funds for heritage-led regeneration schemes.

- Creating a supplementary list of locally significant structures.

Such a list would acknowledge the significance of and provide information about locally important, but unlisted, historic structures. It would be a significant and beneficial planning and regeneration tool. The ‘other significant buildings’ identified on Figure 5 and in CSUS digital mapping offer an initial baseline for such a list.

- A review of the boundaries of the present Conservation Area (see Figure 5) and preparation of a Conservation Area Appraisal.

St Ives already has a long established Conservation Area in place. However, this study has established that a larger area of the historic settlement merits consideration for inclusion in an extended Conservation Area. Much of the primary study area defined here as the 1907 urban extent, can be argued to be ‘An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of
which it is desirable to preserve and enhance’. This would include, for example, the terraces bordering the Stennack, the Malakoff, the 19th century curved terrace at the bottom of The Terrace and the area east of Barnoon Hill already included within the Article 4 Direction (below) but not currently within the Conservation Area. Extending the Conservation Area would be a positive way of managing change and conserving and enhancing what is special and unique about the historic environment of the town.

- A review of the area covered by the existing Article 4 direction and a review of its effective policy coverage.

An Article 4 Direction is in place for an area slightly larger than the current Conservation Area (see Fig 5). This Direction was established in 1979 and covers the removal of permitted development rights affecting extensions, construction of porches, construction of other buildings within curtilage areas, creation of hardstanding for vehicles, oil storage tanks, boundary treatments, construction of access to a highway and painting of the exterior of buildings.

Since 1979 conservation-related pressures have significantly changed and it is recommended that an Article 4(2) Direction is pursued for the town. Principal areas of concern in St Ives would include the following.

- Boundary walls and railings – to retain the original sense of enclosure of the individual properties along terraces and streets.
- Traditional windows, doors, fanlights and chimneys – to retain features that contribute significantly to the historic integrity of individual buildings and to the wider townscape.
- Traditional roof coverings and surface treatments – to retain historic fabric and to maintain the contribution that its colour and texture make to the integrity of the historic buildings and to local townscape character.

Such directions should be pursued for all the residential buildings within the extended Conservation Area to prevent further incremental loss, to stimulate repair and restoration, and to promote best practice for alterations etc.
To be effective all these measures require strong and consistent enforcement by PDC.

**Respect and strengthen character**

Distinctively high quality in the built environment is a defining feature of St Ives. It is important that this quality is maintained in historic buildings and matched in all new development. The high visibility of many parts of the town makes it very sensitive to loss of historic features and inappropriate new developments or repairs. Poor developments can have a significant impact on fabric and character.

- As well as undertaking the recommended review of historic environment designations (see above), this conservation legislation should be actively enforced to provide adequate control to maintain the quality of the built environment and promote retention of historic features such as original doors, windows, roofs, chimney stacks and boundary walls.

- Shop fronts are important for defining the character of some areas of the town. Historic shop fronts should be protected, retained and sensitively repaired. New shop fronts should be sensitive to the whole building in which they are set and mindful of the advice provided in the PDC Shop Front Design Guide.

- All proposals for change should be appraised in terms of their potential for maintaining and enhancing character and the distinctive sense of quality of St Ives. This applies equally to minor changes to historic buildings and streetscapes and to large scale developments. Such appraisal is important if the mistakes of the past are to be avoided (for instance, over-large and undistinguished buildings eg Woolworths, Wharf Road).

- Encourage use of appropriate materials, construction techniques and skills. This will benefit smaller, specialised, locally based businesses, and dovetails with regeneration strategies to increase training and skills. For example, Cornish slate roofing is an essential part of the town’s character and should be protected and carefully maintained.

- Provision of site-specific design guidance, avoidance of pastiche and ‘token’ local distinctiveness. Promotion of architectural excellence. Ensuring that all new build is fully informed by the distinctive elements of the town’s character and its specific site and immediate surroundings in particular. Mediocre solutions are not acceptable here – this place is too important.

**Manage the public realm and enhance the townscape**

The public realm in several key areas undermines appreciation of the underlying quality of the townscape. A proactive approach to public realm enhancement offers potential for some relatively easily achieved regeneration opportunities and improvements throughout the town. Improvements can be made around the harbour and at some of the important arrival points, gateways and nodal ‘places’ and spaces within the town. For example, Royal Square, the Bus and Railway Stations, the Market Place and the Malakoff are distinctive places in the townscape, and in several cases on the periphery of the ancient core; they make the important initial impression on visitors that colours the whole of the subsequent experience of St Ives.

Within the core, public realm schemes could make radical improvements to the quality of spaces and streetscape and to the attractiveness of the town. St Ives has an outstanding assemblage of historic street surfacing, granite gutter channels,
glinter stones, granite paving and stepped opes. Properly recorded and understood, these should form the basis of truly locally distinctive design for enhancements to the public realm.

A thorough audit of the town’s public realm is recommended and should include assessment of:

- street furniture – litter bins, benches, lighting, bollards etc,
- signage – pedestrian, vehicular, business etc and
- surfacing – both surviving historic elements and contemporary finishes, including an assessment of the scope for uncovering further examples of historic cobbling, granite gutter and steps currently hidden under modern tarmac.

Following this audit an agreed public realm strategy should be developed and agreed. Such a strategy could facilitate rationalisation of unused and unsightly fittings, increased effectiveness and appropriateness of necessary signage, and enhancement of historic features. It should result in a coordinated, simple and appropriately high quality, well designed public realm for the town that befits its outstanding natural setting and built environment. It should prevent future unnecessary cluttering of streets and spaces.

The strategy should be flexible to respect and enhance the different areas of character within the town – a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach would not be appropriate. It will require collaboration and partnership working between all involved, including the local authorities and private businesses and residents.

**Manage traffic and parking**

Traffic, parking and vehicle / pedestrian conflict are all issues affecting St Ives and the appreciation of its historic environment. Traffic levels fluctuate markedly with seasonality. The impact of traffic is most obtrusive around the Market Place, around the harbour and in Down’long where Back Road forms one of the only routes out of town. The volume of traffic negotiating the town’s narrow road system is also keenly felt in High Street, Tregenna Hill and Place and in the Gabriel Street area.

**Discourage traffic in the town centre**

- Discourage visitors from driving through the town centre and consider ensuring that parking in some of the core car parks (such as the Island car park) are for residents and disabled visitors only.

There is already a fixed sign on the main route into town during the summer season stating that the town centre car parks are full, but this appears unheeded with many still attempting to park in the centre rather than using the extensive peripheral car parking provision off Trewidden Road.

- Increase pedestrian priority in core areas of the town

Character and the historic environment can contribute to the design and effectiveness of traffic management schemes by, for example:

- enhancing ‘gateways’ on roads into the town to emphasise the transition...
to an urban environment, with lower vehicle speeds, thus reducing excessive and repetitive signage in the rest of the town;

- designing roads within the historic town as streets in which people move, live and work, rather than simply as roads for vehicle traffic (manifested, for example, in the ratio of carriageway and pavement widths, scale of lighting, form of signs and surface treatments);

- placing streetscape improvements at the heart of future traffic management schemes, thus playing a key role in the enhancement of the public realm;

- recognising the value of the historic buildings and streetscapes in the transport interchange area and using these as the basis for an effective re-planning of the area (rather than considering traffic circulation in isolation from its immediate context).

**Promote alternatives to town centre parking**

A positive approach to alternatives to town centre parking needs to be pursued.

- Promote the use of peripheral car parks, especially those on Trewidden Road.

The upper car parks are currently rather divorced from the rest of town and this perception needs to be addressed in order to promote their use.

The landscaping of these car parks could be enhanced with a programme of planting trees and shrubs. As well as softening the impact of the exposed tarmac area in views from the town centre, it would also better integrate the car parks with the rest of the town, raising the quality of this important arrival point by mirroring the trees and soft landscaping of the Tregenna Castle grounds.

The breath-taking views from the Trewidden Road car parks could be used to attract greater use. A well landscaped picnic area and viewing point providing an interpretation of the principal visible landmarks could become part of a visit to the town, orientating the visitor and providing an introduction to the town and surrounding area. It could form the starting point of a town trail.

The steep walk into town from the upper car parks is probably the main reason people attempt to park in the town centre. The current provision of a park-and-ride mini bus setting down at Royal Square could be significantly improved. Upgraded vehicles reflecting the international quality of the resort could become customised adverts for the resort, as seen elsewhere in Cornwall in the Eden link buses.

Royal Square itself could also be enhanced (discussed further above and in Section 8, Character Area 2) as could the network of stepped footpaths linking the
Promote the use of public transport alternatives

Public transport routes to St Ives offer both train and bus, with park and ride established on the edge of town from the Trewidden Road car parks and via the railway at Lelant Saltings. Further promotion of these alternatives could only be beneficial.

The branch rail line, connecting to the main line at St Erth, presents one of Britain’s most remarkable train journey experiences. By far the best way to arrive in St Ives, the route skirts the edge of the bird-filled Lelant Saltings before reaching the sea and sweeping alongside the golden sands of Carbis Bay with deliciously panoramic views into St Ives itself.

However, following the beauty of the train journey, the station at journey’s end is disappointing and needs enhancement (see Section 8, Character Area 6). Investigate moving the bus station to the rail station complex to provide an integrated public transport interchange.

**Improve connectivity – an holistic approach to St Ives**

Currently St Ives is somewhat disjointed, the ‘tourist town’ separated from the ‘resident’s town’ and other areas isolated from each other. To some extent this is due to the strength of the different distinctive character areas within the town. Although the character of these areas should not be diluted, in order to maximise the town’s future success a more holistic approach is needed. Cherry-picking of important core areas of the townscape, such as the harbour and Down’long, has led to the deterioration of other areas, such as the Royal Square area. However, these neglected areas often form first impressions of the town and the daily environment of residents and so require enhancement.

The stepped opeways or footpaths, a distinctive element of the town’s character, tie different parts together, linking the upper residential town and the lower historic core. They also connect the main car parks and public transport arrival points to the town centre. These important communication routes require enhancement. Many retain impressive granite steps but others could be enhanced through renewing surfacing, railings, lighting and signage using locally distinctive and locally manufactured street furniture. These pedestrian arteries provide an opportunity to increase the distinctiveness of the townscape and add to the beauty of the urban experience. An element of public art in such enhancements may also be appropriate.

**Creative industries and the historic environment**

The creative industries obviously play an important role in the economy of St Ives and the wider Penwith area, as explored in *The Creative Edge: A report into the creative industries in Penwith* commissioned by PDC. These industries add much to the character of the town and utilise a number of historic and significant buildings.

Tate St Ives has had a dramatic effect on the town transforming the derelict gasworks site into a pioneer of cultural regeneration. Its success has exceeded all expectations and an extension of the gallery and its programme of activities is currently being proposed.

Tate St Ives Phase II is an important development prospect for the town. This proposed extension onto Barnoon car park is intended to cater for 275,000 visitors per annum (35,000 more than present). It offers the potential for further or better integrating the Tate with the local community. (See the study of the feasibility of such integration carried out by Atlantic Consultants with Peter Davies and Landscape Design Associates.)
This second phase offers the opportunity for another exciting piece of architecture that is both of its time but also of its place – a feat successfully accomplished by the 1993 Evans and Shalev award winning building. Seven architects have been selected to take part in a RIBA architectural competition, including the architects of the existing gallery building. One of the distinctive features of the townscape is the variety of its skyline and the new building should make a positive contribution to this.

The Leach Pottery is also the subject of a potentially substantial cultural regeneration project. Proposals here are for the extension of the museum and development of a specialist ceramics incubator unit linked to the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC).

Elsewhere throughout the town historic buildings offer opportunities for regeneration, upgrading and development to accommodate the creative industries. In particular the Mariners’ Church (the gallery of the St Ives Society of Artists) and Porthmeor Studios are landmark buildings that are currently at risk and in need of urgent repair. Porthmeor Studios currently houses both fishermen and artists in a surviving cellar and netloft, a joint use that should be maintained as historically appropriate.

**Market, promote and interpret**

The various attractions of St Ives are already marketed through printed literature, web sites and other means. However the quality of this marketing and the overall ‘branding’ of the town could be developed. The historic character and fabric of the town are fundamental to its attraction and could be more widely promoted as a positive asset.

The Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is currently located in the Guildhall. The site is not central, nor Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. Together with PDC’s offices in the adjacent Old Vicarage, there is scope for improved presentation, promotion and access. It may be beneficial for the TIC to be relocated to a more visible, convenient and attractive location.

A number of town walks and trails already exist and details are available from the TIC, including the ‘Back Road Arts and Crafts trail’, ‘A walk around the historic town of St Ives’ and ‘Stones of Land and Sea. A sculpture trail exploring Barbara Hepworth’s public works in the town of St Ives’. There is potential, however, to expand this provision by creating a series of walks developed around a range of themes.

Night-time enjoyment of the historic environment could be enhanced by a targeted and sensitive lighting scheme for some of the town’s key buildings. The Civic Trust report suggested suitable buildings.

The town already has several heritage and cultural attractions promoting greater understanding of the town’s history. The St Ives Trust Archive Centre and its dedicated web site, the town museum at Wheal Dream, the studios of Barbara Hepworth and Bernard Leach and Tate St Ives all offer excellent resources. Further research and recording of the town’s past and its historic environment should be encouraged and publicised.
However the importance of the St Ives School of Painting and the interesting history of the town merit additional museum, gallery or interpretation centre treatment offering a permanent, year-round, state-of-the-art presentation.

There may be scope to more proactively market St Ives as an out of season destination for specialist art and craft shopping, cultural tourism and education. There may also be an opportunity to develop out-of-season learning opportunities in the town and surrounding area associated with its rich cultural traditions including both art and the wider urban and rural historic environment.

**Manage and enhance the urban greenscape**

The importance of soft landscaping and trees in the streetscape, wider townscape and in specific parks and gardens has been identified as an important element in the character of the town. There are opportunities for the enhancement of such urban greening.

The coverage of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) should be reviewed and promoted in order to better protect this important asset.

The Malakoff offers some of the best views of the town and wider bay. Currently its presentation and public realm is very dated. This area would benefit from a targeted enhancement scheme to improve the attractiveness and amenity use of this important public space.

Porthminster Gardens is another area suitable for soft landscaping enhancement. A community group is currently championing this area and PDC are assessing the possibility of a Liveability funded project here (the Liveability Fund is a government promoted fund to improve public spaces and park areas to enhance the quality of local environments).

**The spectacular viewing platform of the Malakoff could be significantly enhanced by a public realm scheme**

As well as the distinctly urban green spaces the town also has more natural and undeveloped open areas, for example the Island. The character of these areas should be protected, development and urbanisation resisted. For example, the recent upgrading of the Island car park has unfortunately attempted to treat this space as part of the town, as demonstrated in the choice of street lighting units. It is more appropriate to see this car park as part of the natural environment of the Island and keep its public realm treatment rural rather than urban in character, and minimal in impact.

The South West Coastal Path runs through the town and brings in many walking visitors. It provides good links between the town and its surrounding landscape but unfortunately is poorly waymarked and little celebrated within the urban area. There is scope for further use of this important asset.
8 Character areas

1: Medieval commercial core - The church, Market Place and Fore Street
(Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheet 1)

**Statement of significance**
Historically this is the town’s primary urban area, with church, market place and main commercial street. Its urban pre-eminence weakened with the 19th century rise of the rest of the commercial town (Character Area 2) and the late 20th century tourism magnet of the harbour. There is a distinct difference in character between the northern and southern ends of Fore Street with the southern end sharing more of the character of the 19th century civic urban rebuilding of High Street and Tregenna Place and Hill (Character Area 2) and the northern end retaining more of the earlier built fabric and smaller scale of the 17th century town.

**Issues**
- Area has lost its urban pre-eminence and Fore Street is severed from the rest of the commercial town (Character Area 2) due to the dominance of the traffic system and public realm treatment of the Market Place
- Churchyard is an underused asset
- Shop fronts along Fore Street are a mix of high quality traditional frontages and incongruous late 20th century examples
- Fore Street’s public realm is becoming dominated by unnecessary clutter

**Recommendations**
- Reintegrate Fore Street with the rest of the commercial town
- Recognise the historic and urban importance of the churchyard as a green oasis in the town centre and encourage further use of this important asset
- Celebrate, repair and maintain the surviving historic shop fronts and replace inappropriate late 20th century examples
- Reduce streetscape clutter and strongly manage the public realm

**Historic background and key components**
Historically the town’s primary urban area, containing some of its most significant components: medieval church, planned medieval Market Place, Market House, and Fore Street, formerly the principal commercial street of St Ives.

However, its pre-eminence has waned, weakened by both the tourism magnet of the picturesque harbour (Character Area 3) and commercially replaced by the 19th century civic and institutional development around High Street and Tregenna Place (Character Area 2).

There is a notable difference in character between the northern and southern ends of Fore Street. The southern end, originally the site of the medieval market place, was largely rebuilt during the late 19th century in the same push for improvement and grand rebuilding that saw the development of the Victorian town centre (Character Area 2). As a result the large-scale buildings at this end contrast with the smaller scale and more vernacular 17th and 18th century buildings at the northern end.

The street now largely contains secondary shopping enterprises. Indeed, only the southern half of the street is included in the Local Plan’s ‘primary
shopping area. Tourist-orientated commerce, including some of the town’s ‘Kiss-me-quick’ element, dominates, especially in the smaller units at the northern end of the street connecting with the harbour. Towards the southern end, boutique-type design-led shops and café-cum-restaurants are becoming established in the larger units.

**Topography and urban form**

Fore Street and the Market Place are on a low-lying, flat coastal shelf, hugging the coastline and mirroring the curve of the harbour. This terrace is defined by land rising steeply to the west and dropping down to the harbour beach to the east. Only the sloping and stepped opes off Fore Street show this dramatic topography which is otherwise disguised within the street. These opes were the only means of access to the western side of the harbour until the construction of Wharf Road in 1922. Most have now been built over along some if not all of their length and so appear incorporated into the street frontage.

As a result of this topography Fore Street is insulated from the rest of the town to the west. Plots along Fore Street are very shallow. To the east, plots have fronts at both ends, with formerly industrial buildings facing onto the harbour, set at a lower level than the Fore Street properties. Indeed, due to the topography, some buildings have an extra ‘basement’ level; for example No. 7 Fore Street is three storied on its Fore Street elevation but four storied on its Market Strand elevation. This stacking of buildings creates the tiered layering of structures that is such a feature of townscape views.

Today’s Market Place is significantly smaller than its original planned form. Encroachment has disguised the formerly larger space, which may have extended from Back Street to Market Strand in width and from the church to the junction of Back Street and Fore Street in length. This formal, planned area had a deliberately strong relationship with the church which served to emphasise the borough and urban status of the settlement. The much reduced rectangular space no longer serves as the town’s most impressive urban open space. Although it still forms an
important nodal point, it now acts as a road hub with a number of radiating medieval roads meeting here at what was originally the heart of the town - the market and church (not the harbour). However, the market place now operates more as a ‘roundabout’ in the town’s one way system. No longer an open space, it is dominated by the early 19th century Market House (1832) and the flow of traffic that navigates around it to reach the harbour and the car parks beyond. The public realm of this important area reinforces its function as part of the road traffic system. Large ‘No Entry’ signage is painted on the tarmac road surface and the area is cluttered with road signs attempting to explain the system to confused first-time visitors. The historic granite sett surfacing has also been largely removed (all apart from the east side), another sacrifice to the road system. In effect the traffic and public realm treatment of this area sever Fore Street from the rest of the commercial town (Character Area 2).

**Recommendation: Reintegrate Fore Street with the rest of the commercial town**

- Reintegrating Fore Street with the rest of the commercial area (Character Area 2) will strengthen the economy of the town enabling future development and growth to take place in an integrated way. It will also reduce the Tourist/Resident shopping area distinction which promotes ‘cherry-picking’ of the town in terms of care, presentation and prestige.

- The Market Place is the key urban space through which to reintegrate the two character areas. The dominance of cars should be reduced and replaced by pedestrian priority. Locally sourced granite sett surfacing should be reintroduced throughout the space to define it as a nodal point, to tie the area back to Fore Street and emphasise pedestrian priority.

Enhancement of the Market Place can play an important role in reintegrating Fore Street with the rest of the commercial town

The church forms an important landscape feature throughout the townscape

Provision of traffic signage should be reviewed and redesigned to impact less negatively on this important historic area. A lighting policy should be considered for the area, illuminating landmarks such as the church tower and the Market House.

The church is to the east of the Market Place, orientated east-west and therefore set at a different angle than the surrounding buildings. It forms an important landmark for the area and the town as a whole, its impressive tower a feature in many views. Its surrounding
The churchyard is sizeable but is lost to view behind a high and impressive granite ashlar wall. Many people will be unaware of the existence of a green space here in the centre of town. Together with the attractive Memorial Gardens (featuring the war memorial) which form the northern side of the Market Place, there is scope for an enhanced green element at the heart of the town.

**Recommendation:** Recognise the historic and urban importance of the churchyard as a green oasis in the town centre and encourage further use of this important asset

- The churchyard forms a sizeable part of the core of the town, but at present is not widely perceived as either a welcoming place or a place of amenity.

- The area could be developed as a peaceful place of quiet contemplation in the heart of the town. Potentially a gateway through to the Pednolva Walk would promote greater use and awareness of the area, increasing through flow and adding natural surveillance.

- A planting scheme could enhance the green potential of the area.

- An interpretation scheme could usefully be based on the church, scheduled cross and the grave memorials and the lives they commemorate.

- Links to the nearby attractive Memorial Gardens (see Character Area 2) could also be strengthened (another example of how the two town centre character areas could be better integrated).

In contrast with the area’s severance from the rest of the town centre, its close relationship with the Harbour and Down’long Character Areas (3 and 4) is one of the major assets of the town. Fore...
Street runs directly into The Wharf at its northern end.

Fore Street is a densely developed part of the town. Its very tight grain is derived from the canyon-like street being flanked by narrow, as well as shallow, building plots. There is, however, significant variation in plot size with double and single fronted buildings, set-piece terraces of uniform dimensions and large landmark townhouses and chapels sitting side by side. Enclosure levels are very high with two and three storey buildings set hard to the pavement edge creating a very urban character. These structures tower over the gently curving street with views along its length contained by the sinuosity that mirrors the line of the harbour.

As well as the curving line there are also some abruptly angled changes in build line and road direction within the street. These topographical features are likely to indicate distinct phases of development and may also show later encroachments and creep. For example, the street is relatively straight from its southern end to the Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel mid way along its length. Close to this point, there is a major stepped and sloping ope leading down to the harbour. This combination of ope and change of build line may suggest that this point marks the northern extent of one phase of development. Another former limit of development extent is suggested a little further to the north where Fore Street fans out, leading into the Digey and Virgin Street. The remainder of the street from this point northwards curves around to access The Wharf and slipway, probably early features in the harbour. The block forming the western side of the street at this point has several 18th century buildings, potentially dating this phase of development along Fore Street.

The Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel is set back from the street and set at a peculiar angle, presumably in order to fit such a large elevation and width of building into the available plot of land. This set-back building provides some relief in an otherwise tightly enclosed frontage. It also marks the change in character of the two ends of the street. To the north the road gets narrower with twists and turns and very tight bottlenecks created by the 17th and 18th century vernacular buildings. To the south the road is wider and straighter, possibly due to the extensive 19th century rebuilding here.

**Survival of standing historic fabric**

Fore Street contains a fascinating mix of buildings, of different styles, dates, functions and status. Some areas have developed slowly and in an unplanned manner while others are closely uniform set-piece developments.

The late 19th century civic rebuilding was felt most at the southern end with the dominance of pattern-book detailed and designed stuccoed three storey structures. Only the corner building at the west of the junction with the Market Place retains the scale of the buildings that preceded this phase of rebuilding.

The northern end of the street, in contrast, retains vernacular buildings from the 18th and probably 17th centuries. These earliest surviving structures are notable for their large coursed moorstone granite blocks, wooden lintels, absence of gutters and the low level of some doorways set below the current street level and others above the street reached by steps.

As the town’s historic commercial street, this was, for most of the town's history, the place to be. There are a number of surviving prestigious 18th century town houses along its length. For example, 50 Fore Street, was between 1762 and 1782 the town house of John Knill, infamous resident of the town (remembered in the sky line memorial he built for himself). This large brick-built, symmetrically fronted house has a central pediment with small circular window. Five
windows wide, it has a plain brick eaves course and brick label moulds. Despite the fact that the narrowness of the street makes it difficult to appreciate the fine architectural quality of the building, such high-quality structures were still constructed to mark out the prestige and status of their occupants and the street in general. Unfortunately the brick surface of Knill’s house is now painted and incongruous 20th century shopfronts have been fitted along the ground floor.

The area has several of the iconic buildings of the town including the 15th century church and market house (1832). Several other landmark buildings are located here including the large chapels; the Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapel (1800) midway along the street and the Primitive Methodist Chapel (1831) at the northern end.

Architecture, materials and detail

Architectural styles, materials and details are also varied due to the wide variety of surviving historic buildings.

The majority of structures are of coursed shaped and faced granite rubble, but granite ashlar, brick and stud construction are also present. Surface finishes include exposed stonework, stucco, roughcast and hanging slate (now mostly surviving on side elevations but once much more prevalent). Granite dressings are common but wooden lintels are seen in earlier structures.

Roof heights and eaves vary massively along the street adding to the sense of dynamism and variety. In some instances, eg 45-47 Fore Street, it is clear that whole floors have been added to earlier buildings. It is likely that behind many of the 19th century façades earlier fragments of structures are retained but disguised by this refronting.

Shop fronts form much of the experience of the street. Some very good traditional frontages survive, such as the early 19th century corner shop front of No 22 with
its fascia and carved console brackets, and the Victorian shop front of No 34 with its wide windows framed by segmental arches. Shop fronts again emphasise the difference in character between the two ends of the street. To the south the display windows span the width of the buildings, are large and impressive, and have ornate detailing. In contrast, to the north shop fronts are of much simpler wooden construction, and often restricted to normal window size. Upper floors were also used as part of the shop in these buildings, and have additional large display windows, some being projecting oriels.

There are also late 20th century frontages that are unsympathetic to the building in which they have been set and are incongruous in the streetscape.

**Recommendation: Celebrate, repair and maintain the surviving historic shop fronts and replace inappropriate late 20th century examples**

- Surviving traditional shop fronts should be enjoyed, maintained and sympathetically repaired.
- Poor frontages should be targeted for sensitive replacement to enhance individual buildings and the street as a whole.
- Penwith DC has recently prepared a guidance document on best practice and design guidance for shop fronts. This should help to ensure that new frontages are sensitive and appropriate to both the building in which they are set and also to the wider historic environment. This is not to argue for a ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution for the area. The subtleties in shop front types explored above should be recognised.

As with the shop fronts, architectural detailing is more prevalent in the late 19th century buildings in the southern part of the street. Applied classical detailing is common, such as grand pilasters and the rather eccentric projecting eaves soffits, some of which have applied plaster decoration. Here architectural ornamentation is conceived as part of the merchandising display, with the shop front integral to the rest of the building.

The architecture of the northern half of the street is of a much more humble and discreet stock emphasising the alien nature of the late 19th century buildings to the town. However, enrichment is also seen in the earlier buildings, such as the modillion eaves cornice at No. 60.

**Streetscape and views**

Fore Street has a rich streetscape with the listed granite sett surfacing adding texture and colour to the scene and unifying the architectural variety.

This is one of the busiest parts of the town and this bustle is matched by the need for businesses to attract attention.
To some extent this makes for a vibrant streetscene with much of interest. However, too much activity can lead to a deadening of the senses and Fore Street may be verging in this direction. Festive flags, fairy lights running down the centre of the street, projecting hanging signs, and ‘Swan neck’ lights all vie for attention and distract from the underlying quality of the built environment and urban form.

**Recommendation: Reduce streetscape clutter and strongly manage the public realm**

- By rationalising and strongly managing public realm elements and signage the quality of the area will be revealed and work as a positive asset.

The street is semi-pedestrianised, although there is always the occasional car or van loading or unloading. When vehicles attempt to pass the lack of pavements and narrowness of the road make pedestrians seek shelter in recessed doorways and on raised doorsteps.

Servicing of the shops also does not seem to impact negatively on the area despite the lack of rear access to businesses. Only Market Strand and Back Lane provide service access.

Glimpsed views through opes and shop windows of the harbour and seascapes beyond are spectacular and surprising. Fore Street’s strong connection with the harbour to the north is recognised in the architecture here which is distinctly related to the seaside location. For example Chy-an-Chy on Fore Street is a domestic fish cellar, a building type more distinctive of the Down’long area. However the late 19th century structures of the southern end of the street have little to do with their seaside location and more to do with urban commerce.
2: 19th century town centre
(Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheet 2)

Statement of significance
The predominant character of this area derives from its development as the civic, institutional and commercial centre of the town during the late 19th century. Architecture here reflects this redevelopment with many formally designed urban buildings and polite architecture sited here. However, the area also retains some sense of the smaller-scaled and originally residential vernacular buildings of the late 18th and early 19th century period.

Issues
• Royal Square is an uninspiring arrival point to the historic town centre, dominated by the road and poor public realm
• The area contains a number of inappropriate, mainly modern buildings that detract from the quality of the streetscape
• The forecourt of the PDC offices is an unfortunate tear in the urban fabric on Street-an-Pol
• Traffic levels have a negative impact on the pedestrian experience of this area
• Area has a number of impressive parks and gardens
• Area has few opes

Recommendations
• Celebrate, repair and maintain the surviving historic shop fronts and replace inappropriate late 20th century examples
• Address the negative impact of certain poorly designed modern buildings
• Create a better functioning urban space at Royal Square
• Enhance the forecourt of the PDC offices
• Reduce the negative impact of traffic and increase pedestrian priority
• Promote the use of the impressive and publicly accessible sub-tropical gardens
• Enhance the Guildhall Passage (ope)

Historical background and key components
The character of this area is dominated by its redevelopment during the 19th century as the civic, institutional and commercial centre of the town. This urbanisation also affected the southern end of Fore Street (see Character area 1). The area became and continues to be the most urban part of the town.

Many of the town’s key civic and institutional buildings are located in this area: its financial institutions, banks, post office, library and guildhall, as well as many hotels and pubs. It now forms the primary shopping area of the town, with Fore Street, the town’s original principal commercial street offering largely secondary tourism-related shops and cafes. Here is where many of the town’s staple, everyday shops are located - the shopping area for the resident local population - including several national chains, newsagents, chemists, estate agents, green grocers and butchers.

Before this Victorian aggrandisement the area was more mixed in character. Chapel Street and High Street served as the medieval route into the town centre, but Tregenna Place and Hill were residential, seemingly laid out as a speculative development, a newly laid out suburb possibly funded by mining wealth during the late 18th or early 19th century. Prior to this the area was known as ‘Green Court’ and was the location of the home of the influential Stephens family before the building of Tregenna Castle. This earlier name may suggest that it was the location of the towns’ fair field. The
industrial use of the Stennack was also nearby and included the town mill.

Residential use continues on the edge of the area such as at Dove Street and Skidden Hill.

Principal components of the area include High Street, Tregenna Place and Hill, Street-an-Pol, St Andrew’s Street, Skidden Hill, Dove Street and Gabriel Street, Royal Square and Chapel Street to the west.

**Topography and urban form**

This area forms the lower part of the Stennack Valley. Land rises to the north and south but is relatively level east and west. Streets here are therefore relatively flat with the exception of Tregenna Hill (the A3074) which rises steeply to the south.

The Stennack River runs through this area and although now culverted and not visible it would have originally been open and quite a feature of the area, running down to the sea. It is possibly remembered in the name and course of ‘Dove Street’.

Two distinct phases are visible within the urban form of the area. One medieval approach to the town ran along the valley bottom entering the town at Royal Square. Chapel Street, Dove Street and High Street are likely to have been elements of this early route. Other probably medieval routes include St Andrews Street, Skidden Hill and The Warren. The narrow width and curving line of these streets is in stark contrast with the wide, straight and grid form of the later streets imposed on the terrain, including Gabriel Street, Tregenna Place and Tregenna Hill.

Buildings in this area are generally set directly onto the pavement edge and, often being three storeys high, tower over the narrow roads. Pavement widths are very narrow, sometimes giving out altogether, as along High Street. Here
the build line is also very irregular, suggesting an organic encroachment of a once wider street. This is especially noticeable at the junction with Tregenna Place where the building to the east has been extended out at ground floor level only, the rest of the three storey building marking the original width of the street.

The former residential buildings along Tregenna Place and Hill step up the steep slope emphasising the gradient with their staggered roof and eaves lines. Their uniformity of plot width and architectural design contrasts markedly with the variety of plot widths and building types seen elsewhere in the character area. Along High Street for example the normal tall, thin building that characterises many medieval towns is intermixed with much wider buildings with symmetrical facades and different proportions, sometimes five windows wide. The architectural rhythms along this street, and others such as Gabriel Street, are more mixed than in other parts of town.

**Survival of standing historic fabric**

There is a noticeable contrast between the two main styles of building within this character area: architect-designed, grand-scale, polite and formal, civic, institutional and commercial buildings relating to the 19th century and early 20th century urban rebuilding of the town; smaller scaled late 18th or early 19th century vernacular buildings, originally residences but converted in the late 19th century into commercial properties. This contrast is best seen in Tregenna Place which is predominantly of smaller scale building but has elements of late 19th century rebuilding focused on the junction with Gabriel Street and Street-an-Pol, including the Passmore Edwards Library of 1896 and the Bank building opposite.

The irregular build line of High Street and its obvious age suggests that earlier buildings and standing fabric could
survive behind the 19th century facades. This street is likely to have complex building archaeology that could help explain the evolution of the town.

There has been a notable loss of buildings along Gabriel Street, presumably these structures were similar to the humble cottages further west along the Stennack.

**Architecture, materials and details**

Many of the town’s most overtly urban and architectural buildings are located here. Classically inspired architecture is a characteristic of the area, with symmetrical fronted ashlar and stuccoed buildings boasting highly enriched elevations featuring pediments, columns, carved capitals, rusticated pilasters, mouldings, and other details, often in granite. The institutional buildings – the banks, the post office, the guildhall, the library etc – all display a planned quality not seen so extensively in other areas of the town. The history and character of this area does not relate to St Ives the seaside town, the major fishing and maritime port or the tourist destination. They relate to its civic pride and business success and are paralleled in many other Cornish towns such as Redruth and Penryn.

In contrast the smaller scale, originally residential buildings along Tregenna Place and Hill show a high degree of uniformity in their materials and their plain but strong design. Of two storeys and two windows wide, the elevations are strongly ordered with large, coursed roughly shaped and faced rubble moorstone granite blocks. Extensions into attics have led to the introduction of gabled dormers to many of the slate roofs. The surviving late 19th century inserted shop fronts are generally sympathetic to the small buildings in which they are set, but there are a number of more incongruous modern examples which are either overlarge or recessed into the building.
A mixture of quality of shop fronts is found in the other streets in this character area and the recommendation relating to shop fronts in Character Area 1 also applies here.

**Recommendation: Celebrate, repair and maintain the surviving historic shop fronts and replace inappropriate late 20th century examples**

- Surviving traditional shop fronts should be enjoyed, maintained and sympathetically repaired.
- Poor frontages should be targeted for sensitive replacement to enhance individual buildings and the street as a whole.
- Penwith DC has recently prepared a guidance document on best practice and design guidance for shop fronts. This should help to ensure that new frontages are sensitive and appropriate to both the building in which they are set and also to the wider historic environment. This is not to argue for a ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution for the area. The subtleties in shop front types explored above should be recognised.

A collection of interesting early 19th century buildings or frontages is seen in High Street suggesting that the urbanisation of the town started around the Market Place and spread outwards, concentrating around nodal points such as corner plots and road junctions. The process did not continue long enough for the whole area to be redeveloped, leaving some smaller units in place albeit with later extensions and alterations.

The late 19th century buildings along Tregenna Place and Hill demonstrate a striking use of architecture to define townscape space. The urban importance of corner plots is emphasised in the architectural form of buildings such as the Post Office with its angled doorway and projecting oriel respecting the pre-eminence of the High Street, the corner turret of the Passmore Edwards library (1896), and the chamfered corners and angled doorway of the NatWest Bank where three of its elevations form important street frontages.

There are many notable buildings in this character area including the Guildhall of 1939 and adjacent former vicarage of 1840 (now PDC offices) on Street-an-Pol. The Parish Rooms built in 1900 as an extension of the Church School form an attractive group immediately north of the Memorial Gardens. An important group of large chapels also features here. Many are now converted to alternative uses such as the former Wesleyan Chapel (1784) and its adjacent school on Chapel Street, although the church on Bedford Road is still in religious use. The turret of the 20th century Roman Catholic Church at the top of Tregenna Hill forms a point of interest in the town’s skyline.

**Former Wesleyan Chapel and School, Chapel Street now converted for use as a theatre.**

**Distinctive turret of the Roman Catholic Church, Tregenna Hill.**
A group of more modest, high quality and sometimes quite large scale residential buildings are also important within the area on roads such as Skidden Hill and St Andrew’s Street. Here two and three storey buildings are common, often with painted stucco walls and sash windows. There is a group of one and half storey smaller cottages on Street-an-Pol with first floor sashes accommodated as dormer windows.

A number of poorly designed modern buildings also feature within this area, built following a road widening scheme in 1960. Examples include the Public House, Job Centre and Police Station on Chapel Street. These buildings have a negative effect on perceptions of the quality of the street.

Recommandation: Address the negative impact of certain poorly designed modern buildings

- When the opportunity arises such buildings should be replaced with more sensitive structures that whilst being of their time are also of their place.

Streetscape and views

Although created by 20th century demolition at a road junction, Royal Square is now a nodal point and is where many people arrive in St Ives. It is the setting down point for the park and ride bus service connecting with the edge of town car parks. It currently offers a poorly defined and rather drab welcome to the town and has potential for significant enhancement.

Recommendation: Create a better functioning urban space at Royal Square

- There is an exciting opportunity to create a new town space at Royal Square transforming the area to provide a welcoming arrival point into the town and a pleasant public open area.
The space is surrounded by some high quality historic buildings, but several are in need of sympathetic repair and reuse. In particular the former chapel (later a drill hall) needs urgent attention. It is important that any proposed uses for this building promote the square as an important public space by providing an active elevation to re-enliven the square and preferably includes public use of the building.

The blank elevation of the adjacent Co-op building reduces activity levels in the square, deadening the space. Potential should be explored for ways to re-enliven this elevation preferably by relocating the shop entrance to open off the square rather than Chapel Street, but in the short term possibly by screening the blank elevation with a planting scheme.

The high quality buildings of the art deco Cinema, Western Hotel and Kettle N Wink bar on the other side of the square should be reintegrated with the area, for example through the use of surfacing detail.

The square could be significantly enhanced through public realm improvement. Layout of the space should be reconsidered: potential positive changes include removing the ‘island’ in the road to create a more sizeable public space. Street furniture, surface detailing and choice of materials should reflect and emphasise the quality of the urban form and surrounding architecture.

Soft landscaping could form an important part of the scheme. Public art would also serve as a good introduction to St Ives.

Chapel Street could then be enhanced as the main pedestrian route from the square to High Street and the town centre, reinstating the medieval route to the town.

Recommendation: Enhance the forecourt of the PDC offices to repair the tear in the urban fabric that it currently represents.

The Guildhall and former Vicarage (1840), now PDC offices, form a group on Street-an-Pol set back from the street frontage. The Guildhall forecourt features an impressive Barbara Hepworth sculpture and seasonal floral display but that of the former vicarage is rather barren, being used as an unlandscaped car parking area.

Traditional surfaces survive less well in this area than in many other parts of St Ives leading to a relative poverty of texture and streetscape detailing. Some elements are retained, however, such as along Tregenna Place where poor quality herringbone brick pavements are retained by granite kerbs and gutter stones.

Traffic in this area is often heavy and has a negative effect on the streets. Pavements are narrow causing pedestrian discomfort. As soon as the way is clear, many pedestrians choose to walk along the road down High Street.
Recommendation: Reduce the negative impact of traffic circulating through this area and increase pedestrian priority.

There are several important views in this area that herald arrival into the urban core. The most impressive is the view east along High Street where the staggered build line perfectly frames the church and its tower. It is one of the few views that allow the true magnificence of the height of the tower to be appreciated. Views from the top of Tregenna Hill are impressive, covering the whole town and featuring the linear parallel lines of the terraces along the Stennack, the distinctive rooftops of the urban core and the blue sea beyond.

This area includes a number of attractive publicly accessible garden areas including Barbara Hepworth’s studio and garden, Trewyn gardens and the Memorial Gardens close to the church. They are a valuable feature of the town and an important reason why the town regularly wins its category of Britain in Bloom. The gardens have subtropical collections of Cornish palms, exotics and brightly coloured flowers and add a lush softness to the otherwise very hard urban townscape.

Recommendation: Promote the use of the impressive and publicly accessible sub-tropical gardens by ensuring they are well maintained, well signed and their entrances welcoming, accessible and easily legible.

Unlike other parts of the town, this character area has few open ways running through the building plots. The Guildhall Passage linking High Street with Street-an-Pol down the side of the Guildhall is currently in poor condition and relatively little used.

- Recommendation: Enhance the public realm of Guildhall Passage open way to encourage further use and better integrate the Guildhall with the rest of the town. Its signage, lighting and surfacing could be improved, giving the potential to develop further commercial enterprise along its length by increasing activity and passive surveillance levels.
3: The Harbour
(Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheet 3)

**Statement of significance**
Widely perceived as the heart of the town, the harbour is a critically important part of St Ives. Still continuing as a place of work, the active fishing fleet and other craft add much to the authentic character of the area. The robust granite pier, its two lighthouses and the popular family beach form an important part of the town. The surrounding buildings have been changed dramatically, and often not sensitively, reflecting the changing role of the harbour, now St Ives’ busiest tourist focal point.

**Issues**
- The historic character of the area has been diluted through insensitive conversion and incremental degradation of historic buildings
- Maintaining the balance between the ‘working harbour’ and the ‘tourist harbour’ is important for retaining its historic character
- High traffic levels mar the enjoyment of this special historic area
- Public realm is cluttered, confused and uncoordinated, undermining the quality of the place

**Recommendations**
- Conserve and protect historic buildings and architectural integrity
- Strike a balance between retaining and strengthening the harbour as a viable place of work and safeguarding its historic fabric and enabling public enjoyment of it
- Reduce the level and impact of traffic in the harbour area
- Improve the public realm and general streetscape

**Historical background and key components**
Historically the harbour was the most important element of the economy (fishing, importing and exporting) and it could be argued that it retains this role today as St Ives’ main tourism focal point. It is widely perceived as the heart of the town.

With the changes in the town’s economy this area has dramatically changed in character. Originally it was a place of work, trade, business and industry, serving the fishing fleet and trading merchants. The buildings enclosing the landward side of the harbour were involved in these activities with boat builders, sail and net lofts and warehouses close to the ships and quays. Following the decline of the traditional harbour economy and the rise of tourism, the area and its buildings have been adapted for alternative uses. The harbour features in most visitors’ experiences, offering leisure amenity, a promenade, sightseeing, beach activities and tourist focused commerce, services and refreshments. Importantly, fishing also continues, undertaken by the commercial fleet operating from the harbour, alongside the tourist boats providing fishing and seal-spotting trips.

Key components of this character area include Smeaton’s Pier and its Victorian Extension on the east and Western Pier to the south which define the sheltered harbour area, and Wharf Road, The Wharf and Quay Street which skirt the harbour’s landward side.

**Topography and urban form**
The harbour is enclosed by encircling buildings forming a continuous wall around it and the rising terrain immediately behind them emphasises this sense of containment. Elevations of buildings stack up behind the harbour buildings on the isthmus and Stennack.
Valley slopes, creating an amphitheatre effect.

Wharf Road, a relatively modern intervention built in 1922 to relieve Fore Street of traffic, has significantly altered the character of the area. Previously buildings faced onto the harbour itself with individually constructed wharfs enclosing working areas in front of them. Access was solely along The Wharf or by the opes from Fore Street. Building Wharf Road made the area more accessible and integrated it with the rest of the town.

Pednolva Walk was originally built to cover sewage pipes but has since acquired valuable secondary uses. It forms another 20th century addition to the circulation and connectivity of the town, increased pedestrian accessibility to the seafront but obscured the relationship between the sea, Westcott’s Quay and its fish cellars.

As well as strong connections with Fore Street (Character Area 1) the Harbour area also links with the isthmus and the Island – the Down 'long area of town, historically dominated by the fishing community and their domestic and industrial fish cellars (Character Area 4). Many of the streets and opes that dissect that area open out onto The Wharf, emphasising the strong functional ties between these two areas.

Some encroachment seems to have occurred along The Wharf as the row containing the Sloop, that originally formed the harbour frontage, can be followed through along the line of Carn glaze Place. Another row of buildings has been constructed in front of this, probably built over forecourt working space. Buildings on the south side of Quay Street have also been built onto what was formerly beach!

For the town to have a beach so close to the urban core is an amazing amenity. Very popular with families, it adds noise, movement and a special dynamic to the area. The white sands reflect the steely clear light and the painted boats and pure
blue waters bring vibrant colour to the beach.

The ebb and flow of the tide make for an ever changing scene and the boats come and go, get grounded and refloat with the tidal rhythms.

**Survival of standing historic fabric**

Historic buildings around the harbour date mostly from the 19th and early 20th centuries and relate to fishing, trading and industrial uses of the area before its conversion to a major tourist attraction. Relatively massive industrial buildings mix with low-lying two storey commercial structures.

The harbour, wharfs, piers, slips and lighthouses are important survivals that define the character of the place. The remains of the abortive ‘New pier’ and the granite breakwater of the ambitious but never completed ‘harbour of refuge’ are important historic survivals.

There are also important earlier buildings such as the 17th century Sloop Inn. Much smaller than its neighbouring buildings, a date stone of 1645 is incorporated into a late 19th century element of the building, but a kneeler stone and use of horizontally coursed thin, small slatey stone seen in early buildings elsewhere in west Cornwall support this date. The possible remains of the 15th century ‘Castle’ incorporated into Quay House by Smeaton’s Pier may also represent one of the most important survivals in St Ives. St Leonard’s Chapel, reputedly of medieval date, is actually on the 18th century pier and should therefore be seen as a relocation of the original chapel that related to the now-lost medieval pier further to the west.

Because of its recent change of use, the area’s architecture has also dramatically changed in character. So while buildings can be said to ‘survive’ their original character has often been radically altered.

Historically The Wharf and the sequence of pier arms have been the focal point of activity within the Harbour. Now, however, the commercial properties along Wharf Road are the busiest part of the harbour and these formerly industrial net and sail lofts, boat building workshops and warehouses etc have consequently changed the most and are now interspersed with new buildings. Currently there are not as many shops and commercial business along The Wharf as residential and holiday lets dominate here. As a result the character of these buildings survives better, but pressure is beginning to be felt here as well with the success and expansion of the neighbouring commercial area.

**Recommendation: Conserve and protect historic buildings and architectural integrity**

- Strong conservation management is required in this area to promote and guide change that does not detrimentally dilute the historic character of the area. This can be achieved through the proactive use of existing Listed Building, Conservation Area and Article 4 Direction legislation and the recommended Article 4(2) Direction (see Section 7).

**Architecture, materials and detail**

The overall mass and solidity of materials of both the harbour’s structures and also its surrounding buildings give the area a robust character and unify the divergent architectural styles and varying heights and widths. The built environment is generally of three and four storied buildings, set in relatively wide plots compared with the rest of the town. These structures respond to the sweep of the sea and beach and are not overpowered by its scale.

The harbour piers and wharfs feature huge granite ashlar blocks and coursed rubble. These materials are also seen in the surrounding buildings, granite rubble with dressed granite dressings. Slate-hung elevations are more prevalent here than
in other areas of the town, used as a weather-proofing surface finish for this exposed area. Pebble-dash is also used as a surface finish as is painted stucco.

The original, rather austere, character of the architecture is retained in the Primitive Methodist Chapel which fronts onto Fore Street but also has an elevation here. The plain elevations, limited articulation of facades (few windows facing the sea), and industrial bulk of the buildings has been compromised by unsympathetic conversions. In particular ground floors have been radically altered with the insertion of shop fronts; upper floors have been pierced for large windows; and balconies and roofscapes are now perforated with dormer windows lighting attic extensions. Now the most striking feature of the built environment are these very active modern alterations to the harbourside elevations of the buildings.

Roofscapes also contribute much to the character of the area, with the silver grey slate glinting in the light, stained with golden lichen. Some buildings are set gable-end to the harbour side with hipped and half hipped roofs introducing angled and softer lines into the townscape, part of the rising terrain surrounding the harbour. Some of the 20th century buildings have introduced harsh, flat lines into the roofscape. The vast bulk of the flat roofed Woolworth’s building overpowers its neighbours and is a negative feature.

This is an iconic place within the town and contains many of St Ives’ classic views and images. The solid harbour arms are still dominated by fishing equipment and the three arches in Smeaton’s pier are landmark features often depicted in St Ives-based art. The lighthouses are also dramatic structures with their two very different forms, the first short and squat, the second tall and slim.
The Old Custom House on The Wharf is a fine building of 1830s date, built as a replacement for an older building on the corner of Skidden Hill and Street an Pol. Its ground floor is of fine granite ashlar with painted brick to the upper floor with two oriel windows. Modern shopfronts and signage to some extent disguise the quality of this building.

The modern lifeboat house on the Western Pier designed by local architects Poynton Bradbury Wynter shows that new architecture can enhance character. It successfully manages to be of its time whilst also respectful of place, rooted in local traditions and culture. Its scale, form and use of high quality, locally relevant materials marries it with its setting. The building forms a strong focal point providing a clear stop to the harbour on its south side.

As well as the robust granite architecture the surviving Fishermen’s lodges along the harbour side recall the more ephemeral architecture of the working harbour. Although not architecturally impressive, these structures are of vital importance for the maritime history of St Ives. Thought to have been constructed around 1900, there were originally five of these structures with two being destroyed by waves in the 1930s and 1970s. The interiors of the surviving structures have been largely untouched and include important collections of old photographs.

**Recommendation:** Strike a balance between retaining and strengthening the harbour as a viable place of work and safeguarding its historic fabric and public enjoyment

- Sensitive management is required to retain the living cultural heritage of the area whilst also presenting it to visitors.
- The continuation of the fishing industry is vital to the harbour’s character and helps to retain the ‘realness’ of the place.
The fishermen’s lodges, for example, could benefit from some repair, but should retain their essential character. The importance of these structures could be recognised through an increased level of protection.

**Streetscape and views**

The area functions well as a promenade, a place to stroll, to enjoy and to relax. However, the experience of the harbour is often dominated by the constant stream of traffic. Short-term parking in the wide laybys, and car parking at the Island and harbour arm lure high levels of traffic into this sensitive area. This is disruptive and erodes the sense of quality of this spectacular location. Traffic also poses a danger to pedestrians; in the high season large numbers congregate here and spill from the pavement onto the highway.

**Recommendation: Reduce the level and impact of traffic in the harbour area**

- Public realm treatment of this area should promote pedestrian priority by increasing pavement widths and reducing the carriageway. Textured carriageway surfacing could also be used to discourage cars. For example granite setts could be continued along Wharf Road, strongly integrating it with The Wharf, the Down'long area and Fore Street where listed historic surfaces survive.

- Public car parking provision on the harbour arm should be removed, maintaining a more limited area for those with business at the harbour. (see Section 7 for wider recommendations concerning traffic and parking in the town).

Management of this inappropriate level of traffic has had a negative impact on the quality of the public realm. This area more than any other in the town, is marred by clutter in the form of excessive signage, ranks of bollards and hanging basket poles, poorly detailed

**Recommendation: Improve the public realm and general streetscape**

- An audit and rationalisation of the public realm of this area is urgently needed. Unnecessary accretions and inappropriate fixtures and fittings should be removed while historic elements of the existing public realm should be identified for retention and enhancement (features such as historic surfacing, metal hoops set into the quay side and other harbour-related features).
A coordinated approach to future treatment of streetscape is required. An agreed streetscape strategy should be developed for the area ensuring that developments enhance the historic environment, beauty and specialness of the place rather than degrade it.

Above all the quality of the setting and historic environment should be the benchmark that public realm elements should seek to match. Only the best materials and design is appropriate for this part of town. Generic catalogue pieces are unlikely to match the inspiration of this location.

The small area east of Smeaton’s Pier is a popular place to sit and enjoy the sea air and views and could be targeted for public realm improvements.

Views from the harbour unite this area with the rest of the town. The Island forms a remarkable green backdrop and distinctive silhouette with the densely packed buildings of the Down’long area. The church tower is prominent, picked out from a view of the hillside terraces along the Stennack slopes with their fringe of green trees. Although green elements are not a major feature in the area, restricted to a number of Cornish Palms along The Wharf and municipal planters and brightly coloured hanging baskets during the summer months, the mature trees throughout the town are visible in the extensive townscape views available from here. Seaward, impressive views around the wider bay feature rocky headlands, sandy beaches, copses and green fields.
4: Down’long

(Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheet 4)

**Statement of significance**
This densely packed ‘fishing village’ area of the town has a unique and powerful sense of place. The specialised architecture of domestic fish cellars, the remains of the industrial fish cellars, good surviving street surfacing and granite gutters retain character and identity. The semi-natural headland of the Island and the expanse of Porthmeor Beach with the Tate St Ives overlooking it mark the area out as special.

**Issues**
- The area’s historic character is being diluted through incremental loss of historic detailing
- Areas of traditional surfacing are being lost
- Modern, mass-produced ‘wheely bins’ (for refuse) are highly visible in many streetscapes
- High traffic levels mar the enjoyment of this special historic area
- Maze of roads and pathways can cause pedestrian confusion and disorientation

**Recommendations**
- Conserve and protect historic buildings and architectural integrity
- Identify, protect, and maintain important streetscape elements
- Reduce the impact of wheely bins
- Reduce the impact of traffic in this sensitive area
- Retain the Island's semi-wild character

**Historical background and key components**
The isthmus of bedrock connecting the mainland with the Island has historically been the location of most of the town’s fishing community. Historically and locally known as Down’long, this ‘fishing village’ area is distinct in character from Up’long, the preserve of the mining community and business people. It is the most locally distinct part of the town.

Down’long remained an ‘industrial’ part of St Ives well after the demise of the pilchard trade, with Crysede, Couch’s Garage, Flawns (who produced clothing on Porthmeor Road) and a variety of small businesses and workshops near Porthgwidden, the best known of which was the Nance furniture workshop.

Now predominantly in residential use, many of the three storied domestic cellars have been split into flats and the industrial cellars north of Back Road have been converted to apartments. Second homes and holiday lets are numerous here and house prices are high reflecting the closeness of the harbour, town centre and beautiful beaches. The area contains the Tate St Ives gallery and numerous other independent galleries, studios, workshops and outlets. In addition the number of other shops, cafes and restaurants is also growing, although many continue to be seasonal.

Principal components of this area include the residential maze of urban cottages and terraces over the isthmus, the former industrial fish palaces or cellars fronting onto Porthmeor, Porth Gwidden and Porthmeor beaches, the Island and the Tate St Ives.

Geographically distinct, but sharing the same historic fishing connections and therefore much of the same character of the isthmus is an area to the south, off St Andrew’s Street and The Warren fronting...
onto the sea. This area of former fish cellars and fishermen’s houses is centred on Westcott’s Quay and bounded by Pednolva Walk.

**Topography and urban form**

The terrain of the isthmus is surprisingly steep, rising to the spine of Back Road and sweeping up to St Nicholas Chapel on the summit of the Island. Craggy bedrock outcrops are visible throughout the area; in places some have been incorporated into buildings such as at ‘Rock Cottage’.

The urban topography of the area suggests that early buildings were restricted to the sheltered southern side of the isthmus. Back Road forms a strong primary line within the street pattern and a series of open ‘squares’ along its length, such as Porthmeor Square, Norway Square and Island Square (with later infill), fossilise the splayed ends of roads that originally petered out at this point. It is likely that the more exposed northern side of the isthmus and Island were used more casually for net drying and mending and other open air processing and related activities before being developed. The area south of Back Road has a number of directional roads but is also rather organic and unplanned with houses built around a tight maze of pathways and stepped streets suggesting a piecemeal and spontaneous process of development. To the north of Back Road the area is dominated by later development of industrial scale fish cellars and purpose built, highly planned late 19th century terraces. The topography of this area is more organised with the terraces in particular conforming to a strong grid pattern showing the planned nature of this phase of development.
Survival of standing historic fabric

Surviving historic buildings date from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and include a number of interesting distinctive architectural types.

What is reputed to be the oldest house in St Ives is on Fish Street. With its large chimney and use of the slatey rubble stone it is thought to date to the 17th century. It is said to have a basement cut into the bedrock and if this is a feature of early buildings, it suggests that other early houses in the vicinity may have left such platforms as archaeological evidence of their existence. How this house fits with the rest of the contemporary 17th century town is unknown, although other early buildings in its adjoining row and elsewhere (such as the Sloop) provide some indication of setting. The house is set against the grain of the later 19th century development and may indicate that it was once an isolated structure. As it is likely to have been a high status building of its time, it may provide evidence of this area being the 17th century suburbs!

A granite doorway, now used as an archway to Hick’s Court, off The Digey, is said to come from a nearby 17th century ‘manor house’ of the Hick’s family (now lost). Similarly chamfered granite windows currently in a house in Virgin Street seem to match the worked stone arch and presumably come from the same lost ‘manor’.

A group of potentially 18th century small scale buildings with timber lintels survive near Porthmeor and Norway Squares, for example Cogar Cottage. Numbers 1 and 2, The Digey are also thought to be of this date.

Most other structures are of 19th century date, with early to mid century properties generally being to the south of Back Road and mid to late century buildings being along Back Road and to its north. Street names such as Victoria Road, Victoria Place, Teetotal Street, The
Digey, Bethesda Place, Mount Zion, Love Lane and Virgin Street not only provide immense local character, but in some cases also provide dating clues to their foundation.

The buildings tell the story of the intensification of pilchard seining; distinctive domestic cellar houses, extended family courts and industrial company cellars all playing a part in the industry.

The chapels and school buildings that once served this distinct community also remain although sometimes converted to alternative uses.

**Architecture, materials and detail**

A defining feature of the architecture and streetscape of this area is the fine attention to detail and the importance of texture and colour. Humour and joie de vivre is also prevalent in the more recent additions to buildings.

The majority of the buildings here are stone built mainly with granite rubble, but also with much granite ashlar and dressed granite details. Slate-hung upper storeys, some on stud construction, over stone-built ground floors are common as is white-washed or painted rubble. Roofs are almost universally of Cornish grey slate; the red tiled roof of the early 20th century Primitive Methodist Sunday School proving the rule! In the heyday of the pilchard trade most houses in this area had tall brick chimneys (the bricks being brought in as ballast in merchant ships), many of these have now gone, but those that survive, mostly along Back Road, form a notable feature of the important roofscape.

There is an important local surface finish of elaborate applied plaster detailing on elevations, commonly paired with a golden coloured, pebble-dashed surface finish. This finish is under threat due to the fashion to remove surface treatments to reveal rubble stone. Although a similar 19th century practice is seen in other Cornish towns, such as Camborne, distinct patterns are specific to St Ives. Pilaster details, recessed panels, window and door architraves, storey bands and string courses are all seen in elevations in this area. Vermiculation, stars, crenulations, foliage designs and hearts are all decorative devices seen in this architectural enrichment. In some houses the detail is picked out with the use of brightly coloured paint. A mid 19th century date is likely for these features.

The distinct architectural arrangement of the domestic fishing cellars, described by local historian Matthews as an 18th century development, defines the character of much of the area. An early form of live-work unit, the buildings have fish cellars and net loft workspaces at the ground floor with living accommodation of two storeys above reached by an external stair. Some stairs have no safety rail and are open to the side, others have simple plain iron railings but in later examples ornate cast iron balustrades, twisted wrought iron examples, and 20th century art inspired individually designed ironwork is used as another form of architectural ornamentation.

Houses of this type continued to be constructed in the late 19th century showing their continued success and utility. The late 19th century examples especially, offered substantial living accommodation reflecting the success of the families and the bountiful plenty of the town’s fish harvests.

**Recommendation: Conserve and protect historic buildings and architectural integrity**

- The locally distinct historic surface finish of pebble dash and applied plaster decoration should be covered as part of the recommended Article 4(2) designation for the town to promote its maintenance and retention.
The distinctive iron railings of the external staircases should also be a named part of the recommended Article 4(2) designation.

Although the ground floor fish cellars have ceased to be working areas they contain archaeological evidence of the arrangement of former fish presses (see appendix 2 for further details).

Doorways are used as a chance for further elaboration and detail. Much humour is seen in the naming of dwellings, and reflected in the door furniture. A local detail of hepsed (‘half’ or ‘stable’) doors is also seen in the area around The Digey and Norway Square.

Many buildings open on to streets or alleyes to both front and back so there are very few defined gardens or yards. As a result the buildings have little privacy. Front and rear elevations are often very similar, although ‘backs’ often have very prominent down pipes which become almost architectural ornamentation in their own right.

Enclosed courts of domestic cellars also provided further sheltered work space for processing the catch and were often worked by extended family groups. These courtyards have a tenement character with the tall three storey structures towering over the enclosed yard space.

End elevations of the terraced rows are used as the opportunity for slightly grander facades with the gable ends often treated symmetrically.

Buildings at corner plots, in some of the most densely developed areas, have curved elevations or chamfered edges (to accommodate wheeled traffic) with their plinth bases protected by glinter stones. The architecture is often contorted as buildings were fitted into the tightly packed jumble of houses, cellars, courtyards etc.

The 19th century terraces north of Back Road along Carncrows Street, Teetotal
Street and St Eia Street form an important architectural group. Though set in a rigid grid plan imposed on the terrain, they conform to the cellar design (ground floor cellar, upper floor residential).

The former company cellars adjacent to Porthmeor Beach have an industrial mass and scale not seen in the rest of the area. These sizeable structures have mostly been converted into residential units with the loss of much of their former character. Without the artists’ use of these buildings following the decline of pilchard fishing, perhaps even less of this architecture would have survived. The recently listed Porthmeor Studios is one such building. Clearly in need of urgent repair, care should be taken to retain its character as a fish cellar during the works. The way these structures face directly onto the beach mirrors the original arrangement of the buildings now on Wharf Road.

The Tate St Ives, its design drawing on the shape of the former town gas works on whose site it stands, but inspired by its position overlooking Porthmeor Beach, captured in its great curving window and even in its lockers, built to take the surfers’ boards, is the most recent architectural feature of the town. Successful at integrating with and responding to its setting, it is a good example of how exciting modern architecture can fit in with and enhance the character of the surrounding historic environment.

The detached part of this character area centred around Westcott’s Quay has important remains of a cluster of fish cellars and a quayside, now severed from the sea by Pednolva Walk. Interesting elements of historic sea wall are incorporated into buildings now distanced from the sea. The Arts Club building on Westcott’s Quay is both historically and architecturally important. One of the only surviving weatherboarded structures in town, this
19th century building originated as a corn mill. From 1890 it was used as the meeting place for the St Ives artists. This building faces onto a triangular open area known as ‘The Cuddy’. This space provides benches to appreciate the sea views but could be enhanced by public realm improvements. A modern building and associated car parking, currently in use by Age Concern, forms the other side of this space. Built on the site of a former fish cellar, the modern building is not sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area and any future redevelopment of the site offers the opportunity to improve the design and use of space.

**Streetscape and views**

The organic urban topography creates some confusion for visitors walking through this area attempting to find beaches, galleries and even the Tate. A sense of exploration, adventure and serendipitous discovery, and freedom from cars, is one of the most rewarding aspects of this area.

The textured traditional granite sett surfacing of this area adds a great deal to the quality of the environment and its charming character; much is Listed. Granite channels and gutters are key features.

There are many other areas and small patches of traditional surfacing which are not Listed, but which are important elements of the historic environment and character of the area. These areas are vulnerable to loss through incremental change.

**Recommendation: Identify important elements of the streetscape in this area in order to maintain and protect them**

- A comprehensive surfacing audit is recommended to locate and briefly record traditional elements so that this important element of the historic environment and character is
documented and can be protected and retained.

- Guidance should be provided to inform future surfacing treatments to enhance rather than dilute this important element of the distinctive local character.

Due to the lack of gardens and yards servicing of this area is clearly an issue. For example wheely bins are highly visible in some streetscapes, undermining their historic character.

**Recommendation: Seek solutions to reduce the impact of wheely bins in the streetscape**

- There are no easy answers to this issue, but some houses have bin ‘enclosures’ which if correctly detailed have scope to enhance the streetscape. Street by street bin ‘lockers’ may be another solution worth investigating.

Although a highly urban part of the town, the area has a surprising amount of greenery in the form of container gardens and hanging baskets. The distinctive flights of stairs and enclosed courtyards are often used as a display area for flowers and exotic succulents.

Traffic levels are inappropriate for the character of the area. Gridlock is often caused by cars queuing for spaces within the Island car park. In many of the streets there are no defined pavements and when cars come the gutter holds the only place of refuge for pedestrians.

**Recommendation: Reduce the level and impact of traffic in this area**

- Potential reduction in the provision of visitor parking in this area, as discussed in Section 7, may deter some cars from the area.

- The car park behind the Sloop is another magnet attracting cars to this area. This site could more usefully be viewed as a brown-field development opportunity for the town.
The Island forms an important area of amenity and coastal open ground. It is an important element of the townscape and together with St Nicholas’s Chapel a defining landmark of the town. It has high archaeological potential both in terms of its probable prehistoric use as a cliff castle and for its later defences.

**Recommendation: Care should be taken to retain the Island’s semi-wild character**

- Any public realm works on the Island or its adjacent car park should treat the area as rural in character rather than urban.

The two beaches in the area are also incredible areas of amenity for the town. Very different in character, Porth Gwidden provides a sheltered and enclosed beach popular with families and equipped with beach huts and seasonal café. Portmeor Beach in contrast is extensive and, unsheltered from the north winds, a favourite with the surfing community.

Views from the maze of streets and pathways in this character area are often very contained by the tightly packed buildings. Downhill views provide tantalising harbour glimpses, whilst impressive views of the whole town and surrounding district are available from the summit of the Island.

One of the most significant views of the town is the long frontage of Down’long onto Porthmeor Beach. The buildings stand along Smeaton’s wall of 1800. Designed as an integral part of the harbour improvements, this wall is part of the system designed to prevent the silting up of the harbour. It was also critical in the development of the Down’long area since it stopped the catastrophic sand inundations experienced in 16th century. Despite the modern interventions, this façade retains its industrial scale and distinctive character. This close relationship between the former fish cellars and the beach gives an idea of the character of the pre-Wharf Road.
### 5: The terraces (Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheet 5)

#### Statement of significance
Residential use now dominates the character of this area, although historically it was a highly industrial area of mining and tin streaming. The strongly linear and architecturally uniform mid 19th - early 20th century residential terraces dominate. Set on the rising ground behind the historic core of the town, the terraces stack up the Stennack Valley sides. Importantly several earlier streets and groups of cottage rows of 18th and 19th century date survive.

#### Issues
- Loss of character and richness of environment due to incremental loss of architectural detail and front garden details
- Key approach routes and pedestrian links between the town and the upper car parks run through this area
- Trees and greenscape are important components of the area
- The Stennack Stream currently makes little positive impact on the streetscape

#### Recommendations
- Protect the architectural integrity of the buildings in this area
- Protect boundary walls, railings, gates and front gardens from conversion for car parking
- Recognise and enhance the importance and quality of this area as a key approach to the town centre
- Enhance the footpaths that connect the town with the car parks
- Recognise, respect and enhance the importance of gardens, mature trees and planting in the area
- Reintegrate the Stennack Stream into the surrounding streetscape

#### Historic background and key components
This character area defines the terraced suburbs set on the upper ground and valley slopes to the west and south of the old town. These terraces largely relate to the mid and late 19th century residential expansion of the town. Initially built to house the middle and upper classes, later Victorian seaside terraces were also purpose-built as guesthouses.

Also within this character area are important examples of earlier terraces dating from the 18th and early 19th centuries, including those along the bottom of the Stennack valley which probably housed mining and tin streaming families close to the workings. More properly described as cottage rows, another example of these buildings is found along Street-an-Garrow, where early 18th century cottages share a character very similar to the fishing family homes in Down’long.

A third sub-type of terrace can be detected; early terraces (mid 19th century date) such as Tregenna Terrace built for the town's middle-classes.

The area has a relatively pure residential and guest house use with few amenities conceived as part of the development.

Other principal components of this character area include the formerly rural hamlet of Ayr and the large Barnoon cemetery in its spectacular location overlooking Porthmeor beach.

Terraces and cottage rows continue higher up the Stennack but the character there is so distinct as to be a different place, ‘Higher Stennack’ rather than St Ives. This area has its own issues – not least the need for a more sympathetic highways scheme. It also has significant
historic environment assets which are currently not sufficiently well recognised in designation terms – in particular the cottage rows on Sandows Lane which are important early mining cottages and should be considered for listing.

Topography and urban form

The dramatic topography and the way in which the challenging terrain has been densely developed with terraces, forms a strong element of the overall character of the area and has a striking impact on the town as a whole.

Initially unplanned cottage rows were built piecemeal on reclaimed former tin streaming land on the valley bottom. Later (mid 19th century) terraces were laid out on level ground at the top of the slopes. Once this easier land had been developed the more difficult mid slopes became the only ground available. These were developed, with great engineering effort and skill using artificial platforms created with a combination of excavation and revetment. Terraced rows in tiers along the contours of the valley sides are strongly linear forms in the townscape emphasising the direction of the Stennack Valley and ‘pointing’ towards the core of the old town.

Planned as set-piece speculative developments, the uniform plot width and regular garden allotments add to the regularity and strength of urban grain and rhythm in this character area.

Survival of standing historic fabric

Evidence of the pre-residential use of this area does not survive well. The Stennack Valley was once dominated by tin streaming and industrial processing, including the Town Mill and its leat system. However, nothing survives of these former uses. The upper slopes of the valley were once alive with mining activity, for example Wheal Ayr. Although all traces of its engine house have gone some remains of the Count House are incorporated into Wheal Ayr Cott. The effects of the mine continue to
be felt with the demolition due to danger of subsidence of Wheal Ayr Terrace.

Some of the earlier cottage rows built along the valley bottom have also been demolished, presumably as part of a road widening scheme.

Survival of 19th and early 20th century terraces is very good. Their architectural uniformity is a notable feature. However, these properties are particularly vulnerable to incremental loss of detail through piecemeal alterations, removals and accretions. Because the uniformity of the terraces is one of the most important aspects of their character this loss is beginning to have negative effects on the overall character of parts of the area.

**Recommendation:** Protect the architectural integrity of the buildings in this area

- Expand the Conservation Area to include this area.
- Expand the Article 4 direction to cover this area or create an Article 4 (2) direction to protect the buildings here.
- Include the terraces in a Local List of significant buildings.

**Architecture, materials and detail**

The architectural uniformity of the 19th century terraces is a striking feature highly visible in town wide views.

The majority of the terraces and cottage rows are of granite rubble with dressed granite detailing. Many elevations are pebble-dashed and rendered, some painted white or neutral colours. The earlier terraces tend to be of two storeys, but the later examples are predominantly three-storeyed with the top floor set within the attics. In general the later the date of the terrace the more elaborate the levels of ornamentation.

The early fishing and mining community houses, for example along The Stennack and Street-an-Garrow, generally have relatively plain facades. Some examples here potentially date to the early 18th century. In general, these houses are stone built although they seem originally to have been rendered, either rough cast or pebble dashed. Some elevations survive with pebble dash finish with incised plaster fenestration margins (as seen extensively in the Down'long area, see Character Area 4). The Stennack terraces show how the road surface has risen. Elevations feature large granite blocks with wide mortar joints. Some variety in materials is displayed with No. 24 Street-an-Garrow being of lime washed rubble and cob, and numbers 4 and 5 have slate hanging to the first floor. There are single and double fronted elevations within the same row.

Tregenna Terrace is an early terrace built to house some of the town’s gentry. Built between the tithe map of c1840 and the first edition OS map of c1880, it is slightly later and of lesser status than The Terrace (in Character Area 6) but shares similar characteristics. Its defining features include the high proportion of double-fronted houses, projecting curved oriel windows, pebble-dashed or rendered surface finishes with painted plaster storey and cornice bands, window reveals and ground floor sills. There is a quality in detailing, scale and proportion in this type of terrace not seen in the other types within this character area.

The later terraces display a much greater uniformity, larger scale and higher levels of generic ornamentation. Original windows were universally sashes, although many have been replaced with double glazed UPVC units without glazing bar detailing. Bay windows to ground and upper floors and steeply gabled dormers are common features.

Within the terraces the houses are often arranged in pairs as emphasised in the pairing of the front doors, the mirror symmetry of the elevations, and the rhythm set by the long thin red brick chimneys with their ranks of red ceramic.
The repetition of design and detailing is a defining feature. Decorative finials and elaborate bargeboards are also common.

Roofs along some of the terraces set along the contour are of uniform height along the whole row, in others the houses are roofed in their pairs with the ridge stepped up the slope, emphasising and translating the form of the underlying terrain to the roofline.

Set within these terraces are a number of notable buildings. The old Stennack School is a large spreading, low rise structure designed by Silvanus Trevail and built between 1878 and 1881. Its impressive architectural design features dressed granite with granite ashlar dressings and mock-gothic detailing. An influential architectural design for the Boards School, its plans were exhibited at the 1878 Paris Exhibition and afterwards in the International Exhibition held in Melbourne and Sydney, Australia.

Adjacent to the former school building is an impressive villa known as ‘Eden House’. One time home of the Treweekes, this early-mid 19th century house features fluted Ionic corner pilasters, string and eaves courses and is three windows wide with a symmetrical frontage. Originally the elevation would have been rendered and possibly scored to resemble ashlar; however, this surface treatment has been removed exposing the rubble stone which detracts from its polite architectural aspirations.

Ayr Manor House and hamlet offer further architectural and topographical variety. Originally a rural agricultural manor, the organic plots of this earlier settlement contrast strongly to the planned terraces that now surround it. The 17th century Manor House survives with impressive granite chimney stacks with moulded caps, decorative ridge tile of a knight on horseback and doorway with moulded jambs, lintel and label mould.
Streetscape and views

Streetscapes here are generally in good order. The earlier terraces and rows are generally within highly urban streetscapes with builds set at the pavement edge. The later terraces show more suburban planning with houses set behind front gardens, defined by boundary walls, railings and gates. These front gardens introduce interest and fine detailing into the streetscape. In some areas pressure for additional car parking for guest houses has led to the loss of these features and their conversion to hard standing.

Recommendation: Protect boundary walls, railings, gates and front gardens from conversion for car parking

- Expand the Conservation Area to include this area.
- Expand the Article 4 direction to cover this area or create an Article 4 (2) direction to protect the buildings here.

Many pavements here feature good quality granite kerbs and gutter stones which adds a robustness to the general local scene and highlight the poor quality of some areas all the more.

Midway along the Stennack the normally high enclosure levels of the streetscape break down somewhat with Trenwith Terrace being set back from the road and its detached garden plots fronting onto the street. Street lighting here is not sympathetic to setting, lamp standards here are over large, and poor surfacing further degrades the scene.

A distinctive feature of the area is the stepped and sloping footpaths that connect the town below with the edge of town car parks above. Many are constructed from high quality materials with large granite steps. The paths are generally tightly enclosed by high granite rubble boundary walls but still offer striking views into the town and harbour below, providing a tantalising overview and introduction to St Ives.

These footpaths bring a high level of through pedestrian movement to this predominantly residential area and the area provides several key approaches to the town centre.

Recommendations:

Recognise and enhance the importance and quality of this area as a key approach to the town centre

- This area of the town provides many with their first experience of St Ives. In order to provide a good first impression and to do justice to the rest of the town the conservation, maintenance and enhancement of the quality historic environment here is as important as other more obviously sensitive areas of the town core.
- Upgrade public realm to reflect the quality of the surrounding historic environment, for example replace the lamp standards along the Stennack with more appropriately designed and scaled units emphasising the street as a place for people rather than vehicles.

Enhance the footpaths that connect the town with the car parks

- Explore the potential to upgrade the railings and lighting of these important pedestrian links.
- Improve the signage to promote use of the paths, but keep it discreet and minimal.
- Include a restrained element of public art in this communication network, and explore the potential to use the public realm to interpret the story and character of the town.

Before its widespread development, much of the valley was planted with orchards to make the most of the sunny and relatively sheltered location. Soft landscaping is still important to the area’s character. The majority of the terraced
rows set on the valley slopes include garden plots, sometimes separated from the houses by a path or road. (Elsewhere further down the slope the houses are more urban in nature and lack yards and gardens.) Those gardens that do exist appear as ‘green wedges’ within the townscape, softening to some extent the regimented character of the area. There are a number of important mature coniferous trees in the gardens of this area that break the skyline.

**Recommendation:** Recognise, respect and enhance the importance of gardens, mature trees and planting in the area

- Ensure that important trees are protected through Tree Preservation Orders.
- Refuse applications involving the loss of existing garden plots for development.

Despite its historic importance, the Stennack Stream no longer has much visual impact on the streetscape, although it continues to cause intermittent flooding problems. For much of its urban length it is deeply culverted.

**Recommendation:** Reintegrate the Stennack Stream into the surrounding streetscape

- Promote references and awareness of the Stennack Stream in the surrounding streetscape.

Views here are very important to the character of the area. Extensive views along and across the valley and down to the harbour and old town are stunningly picturesque and rich in detail. In particular the rooftops and chimney stacks and pots are highly visible features. Landmark buildings can also be identified, most importantly the church tower.

This area is also important in views from the rest of the town. The linear terraces are highly distinctive set within such a dramatic topography. The area adds to the excitement of the scene.

In some areas there is a distinctive seaside quality and ambience, especially in pockets rich in guesthouses and hotels. Elsewhere the middle-class residential character is prominent.

Barnoon cemetery and car park overlooking the Atlantic form impressive townscape areas. Phase II of the Tate is to be built over part of the car park and it is hoped that the successful integration and inspiration provided by the first structure can be replicated here. The cemetery is an important and evocative open space with its two chapels of rest, gravestones surrounded by grass and imposing stone walls. It may have further potential as nurtured wildlife area and place for quiet contemplation. At the foot of the cemetery the holy well of St Ia is an interesting feature which often attracts floral offerings.
6: Coastal suburb and railway resort (Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheet 6)

Statement of significance

This area represents an affluent suburb of the town and an important part of its development as a ‘railway resort’. The large detached houses, villas, town-house terraces and grand hotels are amongst the most imposing architectural statements in the town designed on a grand scale and set within large spacious gardens. The quality of materials, architectural design and generous scale and spacing emphasises the sense of quality and prestige of this area. Its splendid views, overlooking the stunning Porthminster Beach and town below, also include bay-wide panoramas. This area is the subject of views out of town where the tiers of development are highly visible stacked up the coastal slope. The mature planting and trees of the well stocked large private grounds and gardens make a positive feature in wider town views.

Issues

• The railway and bus stations both currently offer unwelcoming, confusing and poor quality arrival points to the town.
• Some late 20th century development and extensions have been unsympathetic and damaging to the built environment and character of the area and there is a continuing threat of loss of historic architectural detail and degradation of quality of character.
• There is potential pressure for an increased density of use involving the subdivision of large garden plots for the development of further houses and apartment blocks.
• There is a threat of loss of trees and shrubs if not properly managed and replanting programmes are not established.
• The area is highly visible in town-wide views and so changes here have a wide impact.

Recommendations

• Enhance the train and bus stations as important arrival points and explore the possibility of an integrated public transport interchange
• Enhance the Malakoff as an important public open space
• Respect and celebrate the architectural quality of the area
• Counter the threat of plot subdivision and increased development
• Recognise, respect and enhance the importance of planting in the area

Historic background and key components

The character of this area derives from its original development during the 18th and 19th centuries first as an affluent suburb and then as a key component in the development of St Ives as a tourist resort, promoted by the arrival of the railway in 1877.

This area housed most of the gentry of the town. Residences of the prominent wealthy families are situated here; the Stevens at Tregenna Castle, Hains at Treloyhan Manor, Halses at Fern Lea Terrace. Nineteenth century directories show The Terrace was also the preserve of Gentlemen, the middle-classes of the town.

Principal components of this character area include the railway station and its car park, Porthminster beach, Primrose Valley, Tregenna Castle and estate grounds, the large detached houses, villas and hotels set within private grounds overlooking the bay, and several...
substantial terraces of prestigious townhouses.

**Topography and urban form**

Much of the development of this area is set on the coastal slope, rising steeply to Trelyon Avenue, which skirts around the east side of the Tregenna Castle estate. To the west of this the land rises more gently.

Primrose Valley cuts through the contours descending to Porthminster Beach, its stream is now culverted. It marks the centre of the sweeping, natural amphitheatre of land that forms the steep backdrop to the beach.

In the clean air of these upper slopes the middle and upper classes chose to site their large and imposing houses. They are stacked in engineered tiers along the contours of the rising terrain, with Tregenna Castle capping the horizon in views from the town below.

The generally level streets follow the contours and mirror the sweep of the landscape, as seen in the curving line of The Terrace and the somewhat more artificial line of Talland Road.

The spaciousness of development here is in contrast to that seen elsewhere in the tightly-packed, near claustrophobia of the town. The extensive private grounds that dominate the area induce a feeling of planned space and order.

Buildings are orientated to face the bay and the impressive panoramic views.

| Recommendation: Counter the threat of subdivision of land plots and increased density of development |

**Survival of standing historic fabric**

Survival of the 18th and 19th century historic fabric in this area is generally good. However, there have been a few notable losses including a row of cottages along Primrose Valley shown on the c1840 tithe map, possible associated with the nearby tin streaming or seining activity, and now replaced with the larger terrace and various buildings associated
with the railway including the station building, goods shed and engine house.

A number of different types of surviving historic building can be seen in the area.

- Substantial country houses and villas built for the town’s most wealthy: Tregenna Castle (1774) by John Wood the younger of Bath, built for the Steven’s family; Treloyhan Manor (1892) by Silvanus Trevail, built for the Hains (both subsequently converted to hotels) and Talland House sometime summer home of the Stephens family (who included Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell).

- Planned developments of roads of large detached and semi-detached villas, originally built to house middle-class families of the town and those staying for the season. Many of these villas have been converted into hotels and guesthouses; eg Belyars Road and Lane.

- Terraces of substantial town houses such as The Terrace, Fern Lea Terrace, Draycott Terrace and Albany Terrace.

- Purpose built grand hotels, set conveniently close to the railway station and beach, for example Porthminster Hotel (1894).

These building types share a unifying sense of quality, an imposing robustness of character.

However, there are also surviving remnants of a character which predates this prestige. Prior to the coming of the railway and tourists Porthminster beach was used as a principal place of work by the seiners. Historic photographs show the beach and the area now used as a putting green covered with boats dragged up onto the shore.

- The Huer’s hut and Baulking House at Hain Walk, on the coastal footpath, and the Coastguard Station with its gleaming white Cottages and Lookout prominent in views from the town, are important surviving groups recalling the maritime importance of the area.

**Architecture, materials and detail**

Much of the architecture in this area is architect designed and of the highest quality materials. The substantial scale and mass of the buildings and well proportioned and detailed facades emphasize the quality and prestige of the area and define its character.

The majority of the buildings are stone built. The highest status buildings are of granite ashlar, such as Tregenna Castle and Halse’s former town house on Fern Lea Terrace. Others are of killas or granite rubble, normally shaped and coursed, with dressed granite fenestration detailing, eg Draycott Terrace. Painted stucco and pebble-dash surfacing are also common finishes, presumably over rubble or brick, as at the coastguard cottages, Porthminster Hotel and North Lodge.

Buildings here are massive compared to the much smaller proportions achievable in the rest of the town. Structures are often of three and four storeys (sometimes more), with upper floors in dormered attics.

Extensive fenestration is a key feature of seaward facing elevations. Large sash windows, some in bays other in projecting ‘wings’, make the facades highly active. Balconies and covered verandas are other features designed to allow the views and seascapes to be appreciated. Eaves and roof lines are often pierced with pediments from the projecting bays of the facades, and with dormer windows lighting attic storeys.

Levels of architectural detailing are high with many of the large stone built detached villas showing gothic revival influence – paired pointed arched windows, crests, gable and finial enrichment. Stained glass detailing is also a feature. Elsewhere classical derived
detailing is prevalent such as the window consoles and moulding on the Porthminster Hotel.

Tregenna Castle, one of the most prestigious domestic buildings of the town, is set within substantial grounds, and forms a prominent landmark feature in town views. Its granite ashlar façade, crenellations and prominent chimneys can all be appreciated from a distance. Lodge buildings attend gateways, north and south, along the boundary belt of mature trees defining the edge of the estate along Trelyon Avenue. Within the extensive grounds there are further cottages and holiday lets, remnant copses from the planting of the former landscape garden are now incorporated into a golf course.

The 19th century engineering of the railway station and artificial platforms on which the cliffside terraces and properties are set, has a major effect on the character of the area. The substantial granite walls and quarried bed rock faces revetting the coastal slope emphasis the dramatic topography.

Twentieth century development in the area has been of mixed quality. Porthminster Beach was provided with two ‘art deco’ pavilions built at either end in the early 1930s to house necessary refreshments and amenities. These white painted buildings feature balustraded flat roofs and add to the cosmopolitan character of this stunning beach.

There has been substantial later 20th century construction in this character area, for example along Hain Walk, Primrose Valley and Belyars Lane. This build generally has a more suburban style compared to the grandeur of the 18th and 19th century buildings but generally follows the pattern of substantial buildings set within large private gardens. This new build has created a coastal suburb of St Ives that merges with the similar late twentieth century development of Carbis Bay.
Several of the historic buildings in the area have been extensively extended during the late 20th century. Many of these extensions have been insensitive to both the quality and character of their setting and the original building.

**Recommendation:** Respect and celebrate the architectural quality of the area

- Any new development here should respect the character of the area and match the quality of the architecture.
- Extensions to existing structures should be sensitively designed.
- As elsewhere in the town, these buildings are vulnerable to incremental loss of detail and therefore character. Consideration should be given to bringing this area into the Conservation Area and the Article 4 Direction.

**Streetscape and views**

The area includes a number of important arrival points and open public spaces. These places are important in the overall townscape.

The railway and bus stations fall within this character area. At present neither offers a welcome that befits the quality of the town. The historic elements of the railway station do not survive leading to a lack of focus in the area. Facilities are currently housed in prefab and portacabin-type accommodation and the area is dominated by an unlandscaped, inadequately signed car park with poor provision for pedestrians. In all, this results in an unwelcoming and confusing arrival for the first time visitor – a let down following the beauty of the railway journey they have just experienced.

The bus station offers a similar poor quality of welcome, passenger facilities and pedestrian provision. The town wide views from this site, however, are outstanding.

**Recommendation:** Enhance the train and bus stations as important arrival points and explore the possibility of an integrated public transport interchange

- Investigate the opportunity of moving the bus station to the railway station site to provide an integrated public transport interchange. This would offer the best possible public transport service for the town and allow shared and improved passenger facilities.

**Rail station**

- An improved station building is required, potentially offering some level of tourist information service as well as basic provisions.
- The extensive car park should be redesigned to better use the available space, providing increased edge of town car parking. Soft landscaping could be used to better integrate the car park with its surroundings and provide a pedestrian friendly...
understandable framework to the space. Walkways should be better defined and signposting should be improved to provide legible routes to the town and beach.

- A recently launched project to incorporate public art installations into the stations along the branch line to create ‘The Artistic Gateway to St Ives’ is welcomed and builds on the important heritage of the area.

**Bus Station**

- The Bus Station occupies a spectacular but inappropriate location and should be relocated.

- However in the short term measures to address the dangerous pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, signage and the particularly ugly boundary treatments should be taken.

- This site offers potential for interpretation of the town in conjunction with the impressive views.

The Malakoff is an important public open area set on a promontory overlooking the entire bay. It may have played a defensive role in the town’s history, but is currently a place of relaxation and contemplation with a formal, rather dated layout and public realm. Cornish Palms rise above brightly coloured annuals blazing in the flower beds during the summer. The juxtaposition of ‘Epidaurus’, a Barbara Hepworth bronze, and the surrounding landscape is superb. Its listing comments on the successful siting of the sculpture stating that it ‘demonstrates her interest in the open expanse of Cornish landscape, the sea meeting the land, the curve of the bay and its tidal pull; all elements central to her work’. Numerous benches provide a welcome place to stop and take in the scene.

**Recommendation: Enhance the Malakoff as an important public open space**

- This important public space should be represented through a high quality public realm scheme.

- Materials, soft landscaping and design choices should be of the highest quality and respond to the spectacular natural landscape setting and views.

The Malakoff gardens offer superb views of the town and St Ives Bay.

Gardens and putting green close to Porthminster Beach offer important open space.

Cliff side descent to Porthminster Beach
• This space should be treated as a viewing platform with discreet interpretation of the surrounding area and the town in general.

• Flexibility for a variety of uses should be built into the design, with potential for its use as a place for performances. Historically the area was a town meeting place at key events.

The greenery of the area is a significant positive element in its overall character. The mature trees, shrubs and lush planting of the extensive private gardens and grounds soften the brashness of the large scale architecture. Porthminster Gardens and the descent of the coastal footpath from Hain Walk down the coastal slope are other important green features. Here a network of paths, outcrops of bedrock, inviting benches, sea-lashed trees and undergrowth scrub clothe the cliff edge. Planting around the beach and Putting Green verges on the sub-tropical, with palms and cordylines combining with the long stretch of glistening white sand, turquoise blue waters and enclosing rocky crags; altogether a truly beautiful scene and distinctly part of the fabled ‘Cornish Riviera’.

**Recommendation:** Recognise, respect and enhance the importance of planting in the area

• Ensure that important trees are protected through Tree Preservation Orders.

• Ensure that management plans including maintenance and replanting programmes are in place.

• Soft landscaping enhancement of the coastal slope and area around the beach and Putting Green would be beneficial.
Appendix 1: GIS metadata information, definitions, explanations and suggestions for use

This section comprises a technical appendix providing metadata, full definitions, explanations and suggestions for use of the geographic information collated, created and provided as the base for the figure sequence bound at the back of the report. Five GIS-based datasets have been created for the study. These comprise:

- **Extent of the study area**: defines the c1907 settlement boundary.
- **Historic development**: defines the geographical growth of the settlement as mapped from available cartographic sources.
- **Historic topography**: details the historic ‘building blocks’ that have shaped the development and evolution of the settlement.
- **Surviving historic components**: depicts survival patterns and statutory designation coverage of the settlement’s surviving historic buildings and features.
- **Archaeological potential**: indicates the potential for urban archaeological remains.
- **Character areas**: illustrates the character areas distinguished within the town as defined in chapter 8.

The datasets (known as shapefiles) have been created using ESRI’s ArcView GIS. Each shapefile comprises a number of polygons (areas), and/or lines and/or points depicting the spatial extent of the various areas, sites and monuments of interest identified during the study. These features are attributed with two types of information; the first describes the nature and form of the site, area or monument itself (e.g. name, date etc) whilst the second describes the context of the dataset’s creation (e.g. creator, date created, original source, capture scale). Attribution of these shapefiles has been guided by the project’s requirements and as far as possible the attribute values adhere to current CCC HER heritage information standards.

**Extent of the study area (Figure 1)**

This dataset forms the basis for Figure 1. The detailed characterisation and analysis of urban topography and historic survival that together form the primary elements of this study are closely focused on the **historic** urban extent of the settlement. For the purposes of this project this area is defined as that which is recognisably ‘urban’ in character on the second edition Ordnance Survey (OS) Revision 1:2500 map, c1907. Outlying rural settlements that have been incorporated into the modern urban area since c1907 are intentionally excluded.

The study area GIS shapefile dataset is attributed with the following values:

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Ordnance Survey 1:2500 2nd edition (1907) (Figure 2)

This figure overlays the primary study area on the second edition Ordnance Survey map 1:25 000 of c1907.

Historic development (Figure 3)

This dataset forms the basis for Figure 3. Phased historic development mapping was created by carrying out a traditional map regression and comparison with the geographical extent of the settlement mapped from a series of available historic map and aerial photograph sources. Generally only overtly urban features have been mapped therefore outlying sites (eg. industrial complexes) may not be featured on the mapping until the site/working has stopped, and the land was reclaimed and re-developed as part of the expanding town.

For St Ives the historic map and photographic sequence included:

- 1807 Ordnance Survey’s 2-inch drawings for the 1813 Ordnance Survey first edition 1” to the mile map
- 1841 Tithe Map of Camborne parish
- 1880 1st Edition Revision Ordnance Survey 1:2500
- 1908 2nd Edition Revision Ordnance Survey 1:2500
- 1946 RAF air photographs
- 2002 Ordnance Survey Landline 1:2500

This mapping illustrates the original focal points of the settlement and its subsequent evolution. It highlights areas likely to have the oldest surviving remains and archaeological potential.

The historic development GIS shapefile dataset is attributed with the following values:

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Historic settlement topography (Figure 4)

This dataset forms the basis for Figure 4. This mapping seeks to define the ‘building blocks’ that have shaped the development and evolution of the settlement. Historic settlement topography includes plan-form and relief, hydrology, blocks of particular types of housing or building (eg. industry, ecclesiastical etc), burgage plots and other well defined land allotment patterns, historic road routes and streets, railways etc.

The historic settlement topography GIS shapefile dataset is attributed with the following values:

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Surviving historic components (Figure 5a and b)

This dataset forms the basis for Figures 5a and b. It seeks to illustrate the survival patterns and statutory designation coverage of the settlement’s surviving historic features. Generally these features are standing buildings, but some other historic features, such as boundary walls, leat systems, gateways and stone crosses, are also included.

Scheduled Monuments (red features). 'Scheduling' is shorthand for the process through which nationally important sites and monuments are given legal protection by being placed on a list, or 'schedule'. English Heritage takes the lead in identifying sites in England which should be placed on the schedule by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. A schedule has been kept since 1882 of monuments whose preservation is given priority over other land uses. The current legislation, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, supports a formal system of Scheduled Monument Consent for any work to a designated monument. Scheduling is the only legal protection specifically for archaeological sites. The Scheduled Monument data has been derived from GIS datasets maintained by Technical Services, Cornwall County Council. The mapping was last updated on 05/12/2003 and mapping is therefore accurate to that date. Contact the Historic Environment Record team, HES, Cornwall County Council or English Heritage for potential updated changes to this designation coverage.

Listed Buildings (yellow features) identify those buildings of special architectural or historic interest as defined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Under this legislation the government maintains a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, and operates a Listed Building Consent process to control works which affect them. The Listed Building GIS data has been derived from GIS datasets provided by Penwith District Council in 2002 and mapping is therefore accurate.
to that date. Contact Penwith District Council’s Conservation Officer for potential updated changes to this designation coverage.

**Conservation Areas and proposed Conservation Areas** (red outline and dashed red outline) identify areas of historical or architectural interest as defined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This is mostly used in urban areas, although as with Carn Brea can be used in more rural settings. The legislation places a duty on local planning authorities to identify the special qualities and formulate proposals for the conservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas, known as Conservation Area Statements or Appraisals. In the text of the report it is suggested that additional areas of the town would form suitable extensions to the Conservation Area. Any subsequent designation resulting from these recommendations would be driven by Penwith District Council’s Conservation Officer and would go through the usual public consultation procedures. Contact Penwith District Council’s Conservation Officer for potential updated changes to this designation coverage.

**Registered Historic Park and Gardens** (green features) have been added from a national record of England’s historic parks and gardens, maintained by English Heritage, since the 1980s. It records gardens of special historic interest ranging from town gardens and public parks to great country estates. Parks and Gardens included within this national register are not subject to additional statutory controls. However PPG15 guides planning authorities to take account of the need to protect registered parks and gardens when preparing development plans and in determining planning applications.

**Historic buildings** (dark blue features) are also illustrated. This category does not convey a statutory designation, although it could form a useful basis for creating a list of locally important buildings. Buildings shown here are surviving structures that pre-date c1907 (ie they are shown on the c1907 OS 2nd edition). In addition to this definition some buildings post dating c1907 are also included if they are part of the same development as buildings shown on the c1907 OS 2nd edition (ie part of a street clearly under construction at the time of mapping, or a later extension to an historic building), or if they post date this nominal cut off date but are of significant townscape quality or are important historic features of the town. This coverage is generated first by a desk-based comparison of current OS Landline and OS MasterMap mapping and historic mapping, with the identified buildings then checked on a site visit.

**Historic plots** (light blue features) identify plots (often gardens) that remain unaltered from the c1907 OS 2nd edition map. Plot size and shape and uniformity or irregularity of plots within different parts of the settlement are key factors in grain and historic character and therefore this information also feeds in to character analysis, survival levels and patterns and identifying areas of loss of townscape grain and character. Historic plots are identified through modern and historic OS map comparison followed by corroboration in the field.

This dataset is effectively a scaled down GIS version of the CCC HER/SMBR database and the attribute fields represent the minimum data information requirements for inclusion in the CCC HER. The surviving historic components GIS shapefile dataset is attributed with the following values:

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Archaeological potential (Figure 6)

This dataset forms the basis for Figure 6. It indicates the potential for urban archaeological remains, although it must be emphasised that this depiction of potential is indicative, not definitive, and only future archaeological investigation and research can test and refine its value.

An understanding of the potential is broadly derived from the historic extent of the settlement itself. In simple terms, any location within the area developed to c1907 is regarded as having the potential for standing or buried archaeological features; the earlier settlement core (as shown by the 1840 Tithe map) may have more complex and deeply stratified deposits.

The figure also identifies a number of sites and areas of known historic significance: ie those where the presence of a significant structure or feature can be identified from historic maps or documentary sources but does not now survive above ground. Points are used to approximately locate features where the available sources are not adequate to map as a polygon specific location.

It should be noted that there is also a proven potential within the area for the survival of archaeological remains that predate or are unrelated to the development of the town, particularly prehistoric and/or early medieval sites. In the absence of specific information such as reports of finds or antiquarian references the potential presence of such sites is difficult to predict.

This dataset is effectively a scaled down GIS version of the CCC HER/SMR database and the attribute fields represent the minimum data information requirements for inclusion in the CCC HER. The archaeological potential GIS shapefile dataset is attributed with the following values:

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This dataset forms the basis for Figure 7 and the Character Area summary sheets. The CSUS investigation, in addition to identifying the broad elements of settlement character that define St Ives as a whole, identified five distinct Character Areas within the town’s historic (pre-1907) urban extent (see Section 8; Fig 7 and Character Area summary sheets 1-6).

Character area 1: Medieval commercial core
Character area 2: 19th century town centre
Character area 3: The harbour
Character area 4: Down’long
Character area 5: The Terraces
Character area 6: Coastal suburb and railway resort

These Character Areas are differentiated from each other by their varied historic origins, functions and resultant urban topography, by the processes of change which have affected each subsequently (indicated, for example, by the relative completeness of historic fabric, or significant changes in use and status), and the extent to which these elements and processes are evident in the current townscape. In simple terms, each Character Area may be said to have its own individual ‘biography’ which has determined its present character.

Taken with the assessment of overall settlement character, the five Character Areas offer a means of understanding the past and the present. In turn, that understanding provides the basis for a positive approach to planning future change which will maintain and reinforce the historic character and individuality of each area and the town as a whole - sustainable local distinctiveness.

The character areas GIS shapefile dataset is attributed with the following values:

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Tate St Ives

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- Aerial photographs (verticals 1946 RAF air photographs, 1995 CCC air photographs)
- Historic Landscape Characterisation mapping and text