

Porthleven Neighbourhood Plan



Photograph courtesy of Edward Perkins

Appendix C Local Landscape Character Assessment Stage 1 Report

March 2016



Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment

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Foreword

The Local Landscape Character Assessment is a key component of the Porthleven Neighbourhood Plan 2018 to 2030. In developing a Neighbourhood Plan for the town of Porthleven, local people had been asked in several surveys and open days their views on the type of new development, i.e. houses, shops and businesses they would like to see in future developments and their preferred locations. This process relied heavily on a detailed and clear understanding of the local landscape and how it impacts and reacts on the inhabitants and visitors. This information is vital in decision making on all future developments and helps to justify and guide planning issues. In all of Porthleven's NP surveys and questionnaires the landscape and character were held in very high value by the majority of respondents. A group of the Neighbourhood Plan team undertook the LLCA (Local Landscape Character Assessment) survey under the mentoring and guidance of three professional landscape architects who held several workshops and field trips to assist in understanding the process. Its rigorous methodology ensured that the chances of personal preferences skewing the results were much reduced and the findings were scrutinized and, in some cases, amended for perhaps being contradictory.

Landscape is more than just scenery and visual stimulus; it is a unique combination of many features visual and audio and even smell that make Porthleven so distinctive and precious, it is the relationship between man and his surroundings. The LLCA document identifies and tries to explain the various combinations and features of our environment that make Porthleven so special to its inhabitants and visitors alike, these include flora, fauna and also geological and physical features which are often dominated by the coastal seascape. The LLCA has developed and evolved from earlier work done by Natural England which divided the majority of England into small numbered areas giving each a brief survey on many features including land character, geology quality of farm land. Porthleven borders on areas 157 the Lizard, 156 West Penwith and Redruth 155. These documents whilst very useful are not detailed or comprehensive enough to base a Neighbourhood Development Plan on. The Porthleven Local Character Assessment (LLCA) describes in more detail the special qualities of the landscape and helps to pinpoint those areas which are more sensitive to manmade change.

Chapter 1 – Background to Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment

1.1 Creating a Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment

The Cornwall Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB) Unit contacted the Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group about creating a Local Landscape Character Assessment for the Porthleven Neighbourhood Plan. June Crossland (Planner) and Geoff Pring (Landscape Architect) were appointed by the Cornwall AONB Unit to undertake this assessment. In April 2015 when local people were consulted 98% agreed that the natural environment around Porthleven was important to them, 97% agreed that historic buildings, harbour and built environment was important, and 81% felt part of the community. The preparation of the Local Landscape Character Assessment provided the group the opportunity, to engage volunteers, to look at Porthleven Parish landscape in more detail in order to gain a clear understanding of what characteristics make up the distinctive landscape.

- 1.2 In February 2015 an initial meeting took place with representatives of the Porthleven Steering Group. A presentation of the work previously undertaken in the Roseland Plan on the Local Landscape Character Assessment and the possible framework for future work in Porthleven was taken to the Porthleven NDP Steering group on the 24th February. The Steering Group agreed

that a Local Landscape Character Description for the Porthleven NDP area should be taken forward in order to support the work undertaken on the preparation of the Porthleven Plan. Bill Tearney took on the role as co-ordinator of the volunteers. Preliminary work was undertaken straight away and a group of volunteers was formed.

- 1.3 A day training event for the volunteers was undertaken on the 28th March 2015. The morning session provided training on assessing your local landscape; outlining how features in the landscape, which created its character, could be recorded. In the afternoon a part of the coast of Porthleven was visited providing the volunteers with further guidance on how the landscape can be described by looking at the specific attributes. Fourteen local people attended this workshop and undertook the training sessions for the field survey. Two feedback meetings were then undertaken, over the next month, to consider queries and look at the results. With the enthusiasm and immense skill of the volunteers within six weeks the local descriptions of the landscape were completed.
- 1.4. Chapter 2 of this report goes into more detail about the technical process of preparing the Local Landscape Character Assessment. The volunteers work was very productive and now provides us with a comprehensive description of Porthleven NDP area landscape and this is outlined in Chapter 3 of this report. The assessment looks at the types of landscape that make up the Porthleven parish and examines the features of these landscapes, that is the natural, historic and aesthetic characteristics, in more detail. Once again, these descriptions are provided in Chapter 3. Throughout the assessment the local environmental information was collected for the Porthleven NDP area (Appendix 1 provides this information).
- 1.5 A preliminary public consultation event was undertaken on 3rd September 2015 where the work, which had been prepared on the Porthleven NDP Local Landscape Character Assessment and the environmental information, was displayed. The local people who attended were asked to provide information on the importance of the Porthleven landscape and specifically the areas/features they valued. A questionnaire was also prepared which people were encouraged to complete. The response to this is given in chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides details of the village character assessment that was undertaken for Porthleven by local volunteers in the summer of 2015; outlining the key qualities and key issues found within Porthleven. Chapter 6 of this report outlines the relationship between the Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment and the Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan. Further work is being undertaken by the Porthleven LLCA group on an assessment of the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape surrounding Porthleven to accommodate change. The result of this assessment will be taken forward in a public consultation event for the Porthleven NDP in spring 2016.
- 1.6 This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the Porthleven NDP area landscape undertaken by Porthleven residents, which will assist in decisions in the future being based on a thorough understanding of the character of the landscape.

Chapter 2 - Local Landscape Character Assessment

2.1 What is landscape?

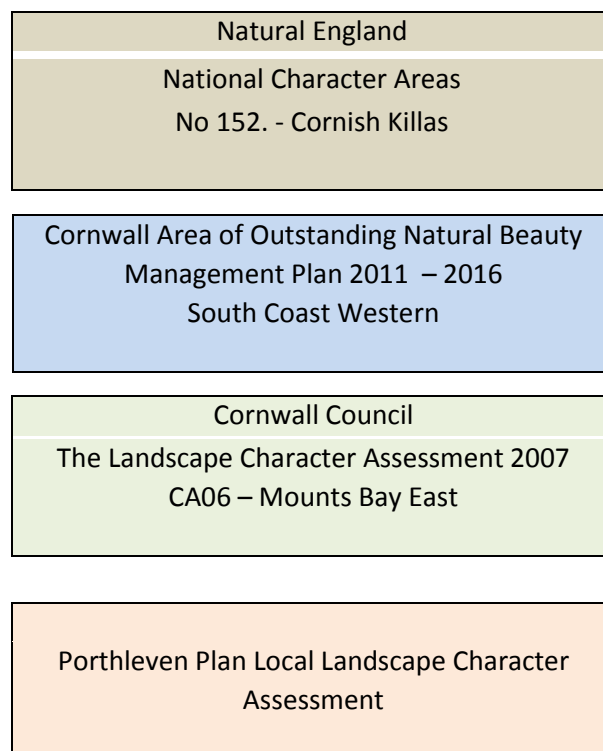
The landscape of the Porthleven Neighbourhood Development (NDP) area that we see today has been shaped by the actions of man and the forces of nature over centuries. The concept of 'landscape' is however more than just what we can see, it is a complex interaction of many factors, landform, soils, flora and fauna, as well as what we hear, smell and feel, and our memories and associations with a place. Landscape too is not just the rural fields and undeveloped coast but it also includes the land within the hamlets and village which give the Porthleven area its unique local distinctiveness and sense of place.

2.2 What is landscape character assessment?

2.2.1 Landscape character assessment is a widely accepted framework which identifies and describes elements and features which come together to give the Porthleven NDP area a locally distinct sense of place. If we understand what this distinct character is made up of, and why residents and visitors value it so much, then informed decisions can be made to allow development in the future which conserves and enhances, rather than erodes the Porthleven areas unique character.

2.2.2 Before the preparation of this Local Landscape Character Assessment two levels of character assessment described the character of the Porthleven area. At a national level this was through Natural England's National Character Area 152, and at a local level through the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment - Character Area 06 Mounts Bay East (Appendix 2) and the south coast western chapter of the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2011.

Figure 1 – Landscape Character descriptions



- 2.2.3 The current national and local character descriptions do not provide a sufficient level of detail to inform the Porthleven NDP Plan, and it has therefore been necessary to undertake a new comprehensive assessment of the landscape character of the area to create a detailed evidence base of the landscape character to underpin the policies of the Porthleven Plan.

2.3 **What is the Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) ?**

- 2.3.1 This Local Landscape Character Assessment describes in detail the special qualities of the landscape which it will be important to conserve and enhance in order to retain the Porthleven NDP areas unique locally distinctive sense of place.
- 2.3.2 Landscape Description Units were used to divide the Porthleven NDP area into separate areas that could be looked at in detail. Landscape Description Units are the building blocks of the Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment and form the base unit for the construction of the character areas. The areas have been mapped using nationally available information on physiographic, ground type, land cover and cultural pattern. Local data on biodiversity and the historic landscape were added to the Landscape Descriptions Units descriptions to give further local detailing. Landscape Descriptions Units are the smallest unit in the Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment, although their sizes vary depending on the uniformity of the landscape in a given place.
- 2.3.3 In general terms, the Landscape Description Units closely follow the more precisely and comprehensively defined Landscape Character Types which have been developed for precise and locally accurate Landscape Character Assessments elsewhere. The identification of Character Types provides an immediate and locally recognisable analysis of all those elements which together, explain the local response to landscape in its totality (Plan 1 and 2). The elements considered for Porthleven include the influence of factors such as topography, vegetation cover, land-use, transport, settlement pattern, visual and aesthetic response, which together with historic, cultural and management factors help to define the totality of the landscape experience within the Parish.
- 2.3.4 The map which identifies each Landscape Description Unit is provided on Plan 3. A detailed description of the elements of landscape character found within each Landscape Description Unit form the basis of the Local Landscape Character Assessment. These detailed descriptions were prepared by local volunteers going out into the landscape and recording the character onto field assessment sheets against a series of headings. The headings follow those of the Character Area descriptions within the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment, and it provides more local detail. Appendix 3 provides the assessment of the Landscape Description Units for the Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan area.
- 2.3.5 As well as the character information recorded by the volunteers, also incorporated into the character assessment were details of designations including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Schedule Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Tree Preservation Orders etc. The mapping which locates these designations can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.3.6 The volunteers also visually recorded the landscape of each Landscape Description Unit through photographs, and these have been used to supplement this document.

2.3.7 The thorough work undertaken by the volunteers created the factual element of the landscape character description, but did not place a value on any element of the landscape. People value the landscape for many different reasons, both personally and economically and the LLCA needed to also describe what people felt was important, and what they didn't want to lose within their landscape.



Local people participating at the Public Consultation event

2.3.8 To understand what the Porthleven community valued about their landscape the Local Landscape Character Assessment work compiled by the volunteers was displayed at a public consultation event in Porthleven on the 3rd September 2015. This was an opportunity for the Porthleven community to add further detail to the character information already recorded. On the day the community were also asked to directly comment on what they valued about the Porthleven areas landscape, by completing a short questionnaire, and by placing coloured spots on a map of the five parishes to describe what they valued under the following headings

- Recreational value – where they love to spend their leisure time
- Historical interest - where there was an important historic feature, or place of cultural importance
- Natural and wildlife interest - where there were important natural features, or important wildlife
- Good views - where they love to stand and admire the view
- Where they felt like they had 'managed to get away from it all'

(A copy of the map with the places of value marked and responses from the questionnaire are included in Plan 4 and Appendix 4)



LLCA Exhibition being viewed by local residents

2.4 What is the purpose of the Porthleven Plan Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA)?

2.4.1 The Porthleven Plan LLCA has been prepared in response to the need for a robust evidence base describing the character of the Porthleven NDP area to underpin the policies within the Porthleven Plan. However, that will not be the sole purpose of this document.

2.4.2 The detailed descriptions of the elements and features which make up the unique landscape character of Porthleven Parish, along with the identification of future development pressures, guidance for land management and future development, can:-

- describe the relationship between people and the land;
- define the locality highlighting what creates the Porthleven NDP area sense of place;
- celebrate what is important to the local community and visitors;
- objectively guide the right development to the right place;
- inform decisions on the environmental implications of a development application;
- ensure quality of design where local character and vernacular building styles are respected
- help to set priorities for future land management and siting of development;
- provide detailed environmental information relating to designated landscapes.

2.4.3 This Local Landscape Character Assessment is an evidence base for community led planning which has been researched, written and edited by local people.

Chapter 3 – Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 As outlined in chapters 1 and 2 an assessment of the local landscape has been prepared for Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan by local people. The details of this Local Landscape Character Assessment are provided in this chapter. The Neighbourhood Development Plan area has been assessed using Landscape Description Units (LDU); see further details in chapter 2. The Landscape Description Units were used in the Cornwall Council Landscape Character Assessment 2007

<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/cornwallslandscape/landscape-character-assessment-2007>

- 3.1.2 The Landscape Description Units that cover the Porthleven Plan area are:

LDU 026 – The beach and cliffs between Little Trigg rock and Loe Bar

LDU 061 - The coastal area to the west of the harbour, including Breageside and Bullion Cliff

LDU 122 – The settlement adjoining the coast to the east of the harbour, including Highburrow and Gravesend

LDU 150 – The land to the west of Loe Pool, including the Penrose Estate and the valley to the north of Lower Lanner

LDU 153 – Loe pool

LDU 121 – The settlement of Porthleven and the land to the north including Treza and Little Antron

LDU 290 – The higher ground, which in the Parish of Porthleven is in 2 parts; the ridge to the west of the village, and the horseshoe shaped area of land including the ridge to the east of the village, extending up to Sithney Common then to Lanner Vean and Higher Lanner.

A map is provided showing the boundaries of these LDU's (plan no. 3); as can be seen from this map some of the LDU's form part of larger areas of land that go beyond the Neighbourhood Development Plan area boundary.

3.1.3 Each of the 7 LDU's in Porthleven NDP area is described covering the following:

1. Key Characteristics

2. Descriptive text explaining the elements which make up the character of the 'landscape type' under the headings of 'Topography and Drainage', 'Biodiversity', 'Land Cover and Land Use', 'Field and Woodland Pattern', 'Settlement Pattern', 'Transport Pattern', 'Historic Features', 'Condition', 'Aesthetic and Sensory', 'Distinctive Features', and 'Views'.
3. **Pressure and Forces for Change** based on the description of the landscape that the volunteers have provided.
4. Details of **Landscape Management and Development Considerations** which looks at how each of the landscape types may be sensitive in different ways to different types of development. These were assessed after responses were received on the Porthleven LLCA from the public consultation event on the 3rd September 2015.

Descriptions of these landscapes for the Porthleven Plan are outlined in this chapter. The information for each LDU in table form is provided in appendix

5. The descriptions are also supported by the detailed mapping information on Porthleven NDP environmental designations and attributes (Appendix 1 – Environmental Mapping); this information should be used in conjunction with the findings of the Local Landscape Character Assessment which is provided in this chapter.

3.2 Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment

(This information is also provided in a Table in Appendix 3.)

3.2.1 Key Characteristics

Key characteristics by LDU can be summarised as follows:

LDU026 Loe Pool and Loe Bar, views across Mounts Bay, cliff formation and shingle beach, sea-state at all times (high or low tide, winter or summer, calm or stormy, day or night).



LDU061 Seascape and shoreline from elevated Coastal Path, rising ground to the north with ridgeline towards Rinsey.



- LDU121** Rising ground to the west towards ridgeline (in LDU290), and to the east. Stream in principle valley bottom within the parish. Transition from town to country through leisure activities which allow the country to merge with the town edge.



- LDU122** Dominance of seascape. Coastal Path and new National Trust paths at higher level offering alternative views and landscape experience. Transition from wild landscape to village and finally view down over harbour.



LDU150 The Penrose Estate with its listed buildings, woodland and historic parkland with majestic trees.



LDU153 The uniqueness that is Loe Pool; the largest natural freshwater lake in Cornwall. Relatively steep-sided and enclosed.



LDU290 Dominance of ridgeline and elevated plateau landscape. Open views of landscape; virtually no trees of any stature at higher levels. Dominance of intensive arable and daffodil farming. Increase in tree cover directly related to decreased exposure to prevailing winds at lower levels. Farm practices change more to grazing than arable at lower levels. Mostly traditional farm clusters,



except for particularly visible barn at almost the highest point in the parish. Numerous footpaths and minor roads offer panoramic and expansive views in all directions.

3.2.2 Topography and Drainage

What is the shape of the land?

A dominating upland ridgeline at consistent 70 to 80 metres height creates the topographic backbone of the parish. Running from Sithney Common in the north of the parish in a south-westerly direction through Antron Woods, the ridgeline curves south to cross Torleven Road, and follow Green Lane, before passing between Highburrow and Higher Penrose before terminating at a high point above Loe Bar.

A secondary, only slightly less dominant upland ridge, again at a consistent 70 to 80 metre height, runs from Sithney Common to Higher Lanner immediately to the east of the parish boundary.

A significant ridgeline follows the Porthleven to Rinsey Road varying in height from 35 metres at Breageside to 60 metres at the parish boundary. The topographical dominance described above defines LDU 290. Adjacent to this LDU, intermediate sloping land falls to

the east and west into LDU121 and from the east and west into LDU150. Additionally, the land falls to the southwest into LDU122.

Cliff features within LDU026 and 061 are fairly low, not exceeding 20metres in height, and feature low-level rock outcrops merging with the shingle beach. Relatively steeply sloping land forms the margins of Loe Pool on all sides.

What water is present?

The Loe or Loe Pool, (which comprises the entirety of LDU153), is a natural freshwater lake cut off from the sea by a shingle bar (Loe Bar). It is fed by the River Cober via Loe valley, Carminowe stream, an un-named stream rising at Praze and passing through Lower Lanner, and other minor streams, and drains via a pipe through the shingle bank of Loe Bar.

The Atlantic Ocean borders LDU026 and 061 to the southwest and forms the hugely visually influential edge to the parish. The boundary between these Landscape Description Units is formed by Porthleven harbour which receives freshwater via an un-named stream.

The main source of the stream running through LDU121 runs the entire length of the B3304 and crosses the A394 where the roads meet having emanated from high ground near Carleen. A small stream from Antron also joins at the road junction. The stream from Breage Churchtown joins the main stream at the entrance to Methleigh. Up until this point there are in effect two streams, one each side of the B3304.

There are few other noticeable water courses; the surface –water drainage following the natural slope of the land; for example, in the small valley south of Antron.

3.2.3 Biodiversity

Does the area contain areas of 'semi natural' habitat?

There are semi-natural non-cultivated areas on the coastal band and cliff tops within LDU026 and 061, and from 026 merging into the adjacent LDU122. Within the valleys which form the dominant topographic features of LDU121 and 150, there is a small area of woodland / scrub above Breageside, and further north in LDU121 woods between Antron and Little Antron. There is also woodland and scrub between Tolponds Road and the caravan park, and a small woodland at Treza. LDU150 contains most of the Penrose estate which has extensive woodland cover and as such has considerable seminatural habitat.

Loe Pool should be mentioned in this context, particularly since the water quality, which had been badly affected by human activity in the past, is now improving.

What elements of the character could support protected species?

LDU's 026, 061, and by association parts of LDU122 support butterflies and moths as well as birds such as Chough and Stonechat due to cliffs and the special microclimate created by hedges along the coastal path. LDU150 contains a considerable area of woodland including standing and fallen dead wood and open glades, all of which support protected species. LDU153 contains reedbeds and Willow Carr which support particularly important habitats, especially for breeding birds and small mammals, including Otters. The disused bridleway to Little Antron, Temple plantation (running from Highburrow to the National Trust car park at Penrose), and small areas of scrub to the north of Beacon Crag Hotel are all likely habitats for protected species within LDU290. The deciduous trees and scrub along the valley bottom stream in LDU121 could support birdlife, small mammals and insects.

Are there any invasive species?

Bamboo growing beside the stream at Treza in LDU121. Within LDU150, Rhododendron Ponticum, Bamboo and winter Heliotrope. Within LDU122, at Gravesend, there is an area of scrub containing Japanese Knotweed currently being treated by the County Council. Japanese Knotweed is also present in LDU153 and LDU 121, and there are potentially non-native fish present.

3.2.4 Land Cover and Land Use

What is the land used for?

Predominantly intense arable farming rotating between vegetables and daffodil cropping within the largest and most elevated areas of LDU290. Limited area of pasture adjacent to Higher Lanner. Farmland within LDU 121, 122 and 150 generally pasture for cattle grazing. There is a characteristic pattern of isolated residential properties outside the town, mainly of older traditional construction, based around farm buildings. Closer to Porthleven (LDU121), land uses include a camp site and caravan park, amenity area, cricket field and football field. No human activity on Loe Pool. Within LDU122 there are a combination of land uses including residential, recreation field, car parks for the coastal footpath and allotments, plus a fenced children's play area. LDU026 is used for active recreation: cycling, running and passive recreation such as walking and fishing plus general beach use.

What is the vegetation cover?

Higher ground within LDU121 and 290 predominantly a mixture of arable and pasture, small areas of woodland, with main blocks of woodland concentrated within Penrose estate. There is also Georgian parkland and gardens associated with the estate. Deciduous trees concentrated along streams and hedgerows at lower levels. Vegetation on the edge of Loe Pool (LDU153) is reed-bed and Willow Carr.

Cliff-tops and the immediate margins within LDU026 contain Gorse, Hottentot Fig, coarse grasses and Sea Thrift. Distinctive Pines at the merge with LDU122 above Loe Bar. Scrub on steeper land between LDU026 and 122.

3.2.5 Field and Woodland Pattern

Where is the woodland located?

No significant woodland at higher locations, except at Antron where isolated and elevated woodland creates a distinctive feature, and the Temple plantation shelterbelt, which almost spans the total width of LDU290 and is highly visible, particularly when viewed from the west. Field boundaries have increasing tree cover and become denser on approaching lower ground from LDU290 into LDU121 and 150.

Penrose woodlands are located on valley sides (some steep), mostly facing east with numerous ancient woodland plant indicators e.g. bluebells and wood anemones. One block of ancient semi-natural woodland (Oak Grove), Bar Walk Plantation is mixed woodland, and Lionel's Plantation is a block of dense conifers. LDU026, 061 and 122 lack woodland due to their proximity to the ocean and hence degree of exposure, except for a small block of scrub woodland of visual note just above the harbour in LDU121. There is also an area of scrub woodland in LDU121 adjacent to the B3304.

What size are the fields?

A mixture of large and medium size fields dominates the higher ground, decreasing to small in valley bottoms is a general description of LDU121, 122 and 290. Hedges have been removed to increase field size in LDU121 and 290. Small fields border the settlement at Gravesend.



Fields approaching woodland on the Penrose Estate

What are the hedges made of?

Predominantly Cornish hedges made of stone and managed to varying degrees. On higher ground adjacent to arable land invariably with limited vegetation. Dense stunted thicket is characteristic of the windswept hedges within LDU122. In LDU150, trees are present in sheltered valley locations. Similarly, in LDU121 and 290 hedges have trees at lower levels decreasing to sparser cover on higher ground.

What is the character of the hedge?

In elevated exposed conditions, hedges lack scale, frequently windswept, characterised by grasses, bramble and scrub vegetation.

At decreasing elevations tree density increases, as does the scale of the understorey shrub species. Tree form more balanced at lower levels as not so windswept. Very few field margins noted throughout the parish. Also, very little additional fencing to reinforce hedge definition; not needed due to well managed nature of most Cornish hedge boundaries.

3.2.6 Settlement Pattern

How is the development distributed?

Main settlement is Porthleven, mostly within LDU121, but spreading southeast along the coast for a short section of LDU122 and wrapping around the northeast side of the harbour into LDU061.

Elsewhere, settlement is in clusters; small farmsteads scattered throughout the landscape generally within the intermediate sloping land character type. Amalgamation of some farm buildings has created small residential clusters. Occasional individual properties at the most elevated levels within LDU290 e.g. Antron, Drytree Cottage.



Looking towards the western ridge and elevated plateau from the village

Age and type of buildings and their relationship with the landscape.

Within the village part of LDU121, buildings date from the early 1800's and in a few cases e.g. The Ship Inn, even earlier. More details can be found in the Assessment of Porthleven Village Character. Numerous buildings grouped around the harbour define the location, in particular the iconic Institute building whose clock-tower marks the entrance to the harbour and can be seen from numerous locations especially the coastal path when entering Porthleven from the east. Many Harbourside buildings are now restaurants and other tourist related uses; little residential now. Very limited development west of the harbour in LDU061 and 121. Style has evolved through time.

The Penrose Estate buildings are grand (Penrose House, the Lodges, and Keepers Cottage) and differ from the farm and working buildings. The stone used is mainly granite, (but not local), with slate roofs. Penrose dates back to the 14th Century, but the front elevation we see today dates from the 18th Century. The current workshops were built in the 1800's, the stable building (National Trust office and café) and the walled garden were built in the late 1700's.

Beyond the main village settlement in LDU121 is Methleigh, originally built before 1066 and noted in the Domesday Book. Also, there is a renovated farm at Treza, now converted to residential use.

Farm dwelling, generally clusters within the landscape, now frequently listed e.g. Higher Lanner and Lanner Vean due to their relationship with the landscape and use of traditional materials.



View of the village from the western ridge and elevated plateau

What are the distinctive elements of the buildings?

Around the village, older properties made from local stone with slate roofs. Some properties rendered. Few have front gardens. Only one cottage is thatched. Beyond the village, farm buildings and cottages are built with local stone (except Penrose: See above),

with slate roofs, wooden doors and windows. Renovations and recent conversions have usually followed the traditional use of local materials. Some properties have large granite posts at their entrances (Methleigh, Treza), and many fields have granite gateposts, especially in LDU290.

3.2.7 Transport Pattern

What is the character of the roads?

The A394 defines the northern boundary of the parish with the B3304 looping from Helston via a steep gradient over the elevated plateau within LDU290 down into Porthleven. Passing the head of the harbour, the B3304 then turns north following the valley bottom through LDU121 before defining the western edge of the parish and returning to the A394 at a wide modern T-junction. Minor roads characterise the majority of the parish (Squire's Lane, Green Lane, Torleven Road etc.) mostly narrow and winding, some with short steep gradients, intermittent verges but no pavements.



The B3304 looking north towards Treza

Describe the public rights of way

The Coastal Path defines the boundary between LDU's 026 and 122 and separates cliffs from farmland: providing expansive and distant views.

The path is well maintained, although cliff erosion has required a short detour to be established. To the west of Porthleven, the Coastal Path continues through LDU061 again providing panoramic views. Generally, well maintained, this section can become waterlogged in places during severe weather. Signage requires replacement at the edge of the village. Unlike LDU026 where the beach can be walked at low tide, rocky outcrops make this inadvisable through LDU061.

New National Trust paths have been introduced linking the Coastal Path with the Penrose estate. Partly following the boundaries between LDU122 and 290, the path is quite level allowing wheelchair access and affords continuous views of the sea and coastal edge scenery. There is a network of public footpaths and bridleways within the estate which are well managed and regularly used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Waymarking is modern and fit for purpose. Many routes are traditional estate tracks for woodland access / maintenance.

High level footpaths cross LDU290 from Sithney Common to Antron and St. Elvan, linking to a bridleway which joins Torleven Road with Little Antron. The bridleway link is currently impassable from its high point adjacent to the large barn at 76m AOD to Little Antron.

Another linking bridleway which passes Methleigh links the B3304 valley road to the higher Rinsey Road.

3.2.8 Historic Features

Are there features in the landscape?

Penrose House (Grade II listed), associated Listed outbuildings, historic late Georgian park with parkland trees are particularly significant historic features within the parish and define the extent of LDU150. Adjacent to, and intimately connected both physically and visually, is Loe Pool, which will have remained unchanged for decades. Porthleven harbour is itself a distinctive historic landscape feature creating a setting for the whole of the village. The Lime Kiln beside the harbour is a distinctive feature and Listed Monument.

Above the cliffs in LDU122 are redundant mineshafts and a World War 2 pillbox. Bar Lodge (Grade II listed), formerly the beach house of the Squire of Penrose estate, is a particularly prominent feature along the Coastal Path.

Elsewhere, and generally on higher ground, there are relatively few landscape related features of historic importance. However, the scattered, older farm buildings are frequently listed and reflect a consistent vernacular tradition. In particular, Methleigh Farm and its associated buildings are both historic and highly visible on the western slopes above Porthleven; viewable from many locations to the east.

There are views of Mounts Bay and Tregonning Hill, Breage and Sithney churches and a tree tunnel in Antron woods along the A394: Distinctive Fir trees at Treza and highly visible and distinctive copse at Antron and prominent tree line at Temple plantation.



The historic Methleigh Farm dating back to the Domesday book

3.2.9 Condition

In what state/appearance are the characteristics of the area?

Recent harbour renovations have enhanced its quality. Solid sea defences have been built to protect from further erosion between Little Trigg Rocks and Tye Rocks in LDU0126. Above Parc-an-als Cliff is a local authority car park in LDU122 which appears somewhat neglected. Loe Pool water quality has improved over the years. All aspects of the Penrose estate maintenance are of high quality; paths are kept open and clear of vegetation and woodland is managed both for wildlife / habitat variety and public access. Caravan Park, campsite, cricket and football pitches are well managed, but amenity areas adjacent to the cricket field, the Moors recreational area behind the old shipyard, and the park at Shrubberies Hill are not very well maintained.

Farmland is well managed throughout the parish, as are farm buildings, bridleways (but see below), footpaths and the Coastal Path.

Are there areas where improvements could be made to enhance the character of the area? How is the area managed?

Specific suggestions include cutting back vegetation along the bridleway between Lower Antron and Porthleven as it is currently impassable. Management of the parks within LDU122 and 121 could be improved. County Council car park in LDU122 could have improved setting and better maintenance. Within the Penrose estate, parkland railings require repair and maintenance. Stream running through LDU121 has restricted flow near Treza due to vegetation cuttings being allowed to remain causing blockages.

Within farmland generally, hedgerow vegetation should be allowed to develop more freely and field margins introduced and / or extended to increase biodiversity. The few woodlands

which exist could have better management, and thought should be given to extending the limited (other than the Penrose estate) tree cover which the parish possesses.

3.2.10 Aesthetic and Sensory

Describe the level of tranquillity

The sound of the sea, wind and bird call dominate LDU026 and 061, and to a considerable extent the adjacent LDU122. A great contrast exists between the bustle and vibrancy of the settlement of Porthleven (particularly in summer) and the undisturbed, semi-remote southern and higher areas within LDU122. This zone can either be wild and windswept or calm and tranquil. West of the harbour, within LDU061 again high levels of tranquillity contrast with periods of windswept and wild conditions. Loe Bar and Pool have similarly contrasting episodes. LDU153 feels remote despite proximity to both Helston and Porthleven.

The Penrose estate was covenanted to the National Trust as “a place of tranquillity”; an accurate description and fortunately this will not change. As for the whole of the parish, this tranquillity can be shattered by exercises from the neighbouring RNAS Culdrose.

LDU121 suffers from heavy road noise along the northern boundary of the parish (this also applies to LDU290), and to a lesser extent along the B3304.

Noise and activity increase on approach to the outskirts of Porthleven. Wind noise increases as the land rises towards LDU290, although generally LDU290 is remarkably peaceful apart from wind noise and the sound of farm machinery from time to time. Also, sporadic birdsong and distant sounds from Helston.

How is the landscape experienced?

The beach and cliffs are subject to all weather conditions from calm days to winter storms which batter the coastline. However, the rugged exposed clifftop allows expansive views and has a very special character experienced from the Coastal Path through LDU122. The Penrose estate can be busy, but its capacity is large. Its characteristic parkland setting and sheltered location together with extensive woodland produces a distinctive and high-quality experience.

On rising and higher ground within LDU121 and 290 the landscape changes from sheltered to windswept as can be seen from the reducing tree cover with increasing elevation. Wind noise increases, but so does the sense of isolation and the expansiveness of views. Woodland and hedgerows change with the seasons. LDU290 has the general feeling of being uncluttered with occasional clusters of farm buildings and expansive views in many directions.

How will the experience of the area change through the seasons?

The sheltered, enclosed wooded nature of LDU150 makes the Penrose estate an excellent location to experience the change of seasons e.g. Bluebells in the woods in springtime and autumn colour. Porthleven has a different ambience from one season to another, not entirely dependent on the fluctuation of population. The south-westerly winds become

more prevalent during the winter months. The quality of light also changes particularly along the coastal edge. Inland, arable land changes through the growing cycle as crops mature and are harvested. Hedgerows and tree groups and woodland reflect the change of season. LDU153 seasonal change as bird populations migrate or over-winter.

What is the level of light pollution at night?

On the higher land, especially LDU290, light pollution is evident from Helston and from Culdrose to the east. Also, light pollution to some extent from Porthleven and from travelling vehicles. Similarly, LDU121 experiences light pollution from traffic, and in the south from Porthleven. Minimal light pollution within LDU150 and 153. The southern part of LDU122 experiences little light pollution, affording stunning “skylscapes” when the stars are visible. There is low light pollution at the northern edge of LDU061 and at Loe bar end of LDU026.



LDU026 pictured in Winter and Spring

3.2.11 Distinctive Features

Loe Bar and Loe Pool are particularly distinctive and rare features (designated Site of Special Scientific Interest - SSSI). On boundary between LDU026 and 122, The Lodge, as part of the Penrose estate, is a key landmark. Within LDU150, Penrose house with its associated buildings (all Grade II Listed), and historic late Georgian landscaped park with parkland trees produce a coherent, well managed landscape.



Loe Bar, Loe Pool and the Penrose Estate in the background.

The Coastal Path is a distinctive feature, both east of the harbour and continuing west through LDU061. The harbour itself is a hugely distinctive, in fact, defining feature of Porthleven. Associated with the harbour are the iconic Clocktower and renovated lifeboat station. Above the harbour is a highly visible telecommunications mast. Continuing the observation on infrastructure, within LDU122 there is a proliferation of overhead wires and telegraph poles.

From LDU121, particularly at the higher levels, there are unrestricted panoramic views into Porthleven, across countryside and towards Mounts Bay. Breage and Sithney churches are visible from many locations, as is the telecommunications mast above Breageside.

A particularly large barn in LDU290 which is sited at 76 metres AOD (almost the highest point in the parish) is visible from most of LDU290 and from numerous other locations within the parish. Two further highly visible barns are located on the ridgeline within LDU290 adjacent to Green Lane some 300 metres north of its junction with Penrose Hill. Antron woodland, manor house and farm buildings, together with the fore-mentioned barn are visible from much of the higher plateau landscape. Similarly, extensive and panoramic views, as described above, are obtained from the adjacent LDU121. This includes the predominant western ridgeline, which acts as a backdrop to the village and provides shelter from the prevailing winds. The historic Methleigh Farm is situated in this area.



Porthleven Institute with iconic clock tower.

3.2.12 Views

From the beach within LDU026 the distinctive feature of The Lizard can be seen. From the high point to the south of LDU061 when looking north-east, the best panoramic view of Helston is obtained, plus expansive views of the ocean to the south.



View of the outer harbour and Mounts Bay from Peverell Terrace

There are fine views of Loe Pool from the woodland walks of the Penrose estate and from the Loe valley side from the footpath linking to Helston. Elsewhere, within LDU150, there are changing views of Loe Pool, and on entering LDU122 dramatic change to expansive seascape and coastal edge landscapes over Loe Bar and beyond.

Important and contrasting views within LDU122. View from National Trust footpaths on the border of LDU290 high level elevated plateau giving expansive panorama of coastal scenery around Mounts bay. Views from The Shrubberies recreation ground over Porthleven and the coast. Also, inland to Breage, Tregonning Hill and beyond.

Along Peverell Terrace between the old Coastguard station and the Atlantic Inn there is a virtual “bird’s eye” view of the inner and outer harbour and the surrounding settlement on both sides.

View from Loe Bar Road looking west towards the pier, harbour and Institute, plus coastal views to mines at Rinsey, Trewavas Head and beyond to Newlyn and Mousehole.

Expansive views at Sunset farm at the boundary between LDU121 and 290. Most of Porthleven, particularly expanse to the east, can best be appreciated from the bridleway through Methleigh as it rises through the western edge of LDU121 and into LDU290.



View of Porthleven and Rinsey from the south west coast path near Loe Bar.

LDU 290 affords expansive views from many road, bridleway and footpath locations. In particular, Squires Lane to the east and from the ridgeline, elevated plateau which forms the topographic “backbone” to the parish. Large barn in LDU290 at 78m AOD is particularly visible.

Views of Helston and Culdrose and its installations on the eastern skyline obtained from footpath above Higher Lanner, together with wind turbines in the distance at Bonython.

Most of the historic Penrose estate and Loe Pool are visible from parts of the elevated plateau. Views across the valley to western section of LDU290 giving distinct elevated containment in this direction. Western hillside characterised by clusters of farms including Methleigh and the distinctive telecommunications mast above Breageside

3.3 Pressure and Forces for Change

LDU 026:

Changes from older style cottages (nearer to the village) to modern holiday homes; many of these have become holiday lets and second homes.

LDU 061:

- Progressive trend for properties with sea views to become holiday lets and second homes.
- Pressure for tourist facilities within the harbour area e.g. shepherds' huts, hotel development.
- The probable trend for the future use of the Harbour will be the diminution of fishing as a source of income towards tourist activities.
- Over use of the coastal path and erosion.
- On farmland diversity into more leisure type activities is becoming apparent - e.g. weddings, masked ball.
- Surfers changing and parking congestion might lead to pressure for management.

LDU 122:

- Tourism -many of the properties situated along the cliff top with views out to sea are holiday lets or holiday second homes.
- Widening the current ribbon development leading to Tye Rock House (and just beyond) further up the hillside.
- Future housing development on the fields at high level in Gravesend in the vicinity of the "Shrubberies" development.
- Proposals for renewable energy development within the fields beyond Highburrow (they are generally south facing).
- Storm erosion to it has occurred necessitating diversion of footpaths. This will become more significant and problematic in the future if current long-term climatic forecasts prove accurate and further damage to the cliff face below occurs.

LDU 150:

- The Penrose Estate is protected by the National Trust.
- Some of the NT owned buildings within this LDU could undergo a change of use which may include:
- Converting residential properties to holiday lets;
and
- Converting agricultural barns to residential/ holiday properties.

- Any changes to farms are likely to result in farming practices becoming more extensive; to help reduce the environmental impact of farming and to blur the boundaries between productive farmland and wild areas.

LDU 153

- Loe Pool will be affected by changes in water level management and Helston's flood defence review.
- The Environment Agency maintains the outfall pipe under Loe Bar and no heavy engineering works are planned for the near future.
- During winters of exceptionally heavy rainfall, EA will install overhead pumps to lower the water level and reduce the risk of flood water backing up. However, the vegetation community on the shoreline of Loe Pool relies on being flooded and inundated with water in the winter, so lowering the water too much will have a negative impact on the ecosystem.
- Helston's flood defence review is likely to look at installing simple infrastructure, which will increase the wetland's capacity to hold flood water. NT will be working with the EA to ensure habitats are protected and enhanced during and after any engineering works. There are likely to be some positive outcomes from this work, such as re-wetting the willow Carr, which has been drying out since the river was canalised in the 1940s.

LDU 121:

- There may be pressure for the caravan and camping site on the outskirts of the town to expand.
- Methleigh Farm has temporary caravan and camping on their land for the masked Ball; this event is popular and could expand in future.
- Almost all of the old shops around the harbour have disappeared to be replaced by restaurants, cafes and gift shops catering for the tourist industry.
- In the old part of the village the shops have been converted into residential. The majority of residential property around the harbour is either second homes or holiday lets.
- The old shipyard is now a complex of small industrial units, shops and restaurants. There is pressure for residential development.
- The land behind Gibson way has had recent development and there is pressure for future development which would remove productive farm land.
- The school is on the edge of the countryside and may have to expand further into the countryside if the population increases.
- The harbour has been damaged by violent storms in recent years and repairs and improvements to the harbour have taken place in the last year.
- Some of the field sizes have increased with the removal of hedges which has resulted from the changes in agricultural.

- Porthleven was extensively flooded in 1993; future development would need to take potential flooding into consideration.
- Traffic is very congested in the Town due to parking on streets and extra visitors; any new development would have to include parking considerations and restricted parking on roads to allow the flow of traffic.

LDU 290:

- The area is dominated by farming and the loss of the herds has led to intensification in crops such as daffodils, potatoes and corn.
- The area can be divided into three distinct areas. Sithney Common to Penrose Hill and Penrose Hill to Loe Pool, which have little pressures for development and Lanner Vean and Higher Lanner. In this area due to its location and views, there could be pressures for change of use such as development for tourism like caravan parks or campsites.
- Any significant development of the uplands of LDU 290 would lead to consideration of merging Porthleven with the neighbouring town of Helston.
- The area due to its location could be considered under pressure from renewable energy development such as solar farms.

3.4 Landscape Management and Development Guidelines

LDU 026 Landscape Types: Cliffs

- The constant cliff erosion is a continuing issue and future sea defences may have to be put in place. If required these need to be dealt with sensitively: especially in the area of Tye Rock where it is a geological and geomorphologic site. They should be designed with respect for the character of the area.
- The open nature of the coast provides extensive panoramic views of the surrounding area. The accommodation of development on the coastal edge and its immediate hinterland should have regard to its prominence, special importance of the landscape and its largely undeveloped characteristics.
- Seek reduction in impact of development on key views from important viewpoints along this section of the coast.
- Replacement dwellings/ holiday homes along the adjacent LDU 122 should be in keeping with the character of the area, no more than two storeys high and of an appropriate size and scale.



Cliffs near Loe bar in LDU026

LDU 061 Landscape Types: Intermediate Sloping Land, Steeply Sloping Land and Cliffs

- The open nature of the coast provides extensive panoramic views of the surrounding area. The accommodation of development on the coastal edge and its immediate hinterland should have regard to its prominence, special importance of the landscape and its largely undeveloped characteristics.
- Seek reduction in impact of development on key views from important viewpoints along this section of the coast.
- Development which is out of scale or overwhelms the landscape pattern and character would be inappropriate.
- Alterations and extensions to dwellings should have appropriate regard to the character of the existing dwelling, in particular to ensure that the scale and design respects the character of the original dwelling and its setting in the landscape.
- Consider how cumulatively development (not necessarily of the same type) can have an increased impact on the characteristics of the landscape.
- Ensure the design of new development or extensions to existing development reflect the local vernacular using locally occurring materials.
- Retain the strong field pattern of Cornish hedges, reflecting the local character of stone faces vegetated with native shrubs and trees.
- Light pollution should be minimised, through appropriate design in new development.
- Protected landscape must be conserved.
- Ensure the protection, conservation and enhancement of bird life and also flora and fauna, including sea life. Green infrastructure links should be enhanced.

- Proper maintenance of the coastal footpath and the harbour for future generations is essential. This is particularly important in the context of the frequency of severe storms, which will impact not only on the harbour but also on the residences bordering the harbour and coast.



Steeply sloping land down to intermediate sloping land in LDU061

LDU 122 Landscape Types: Intermediate Sloping Land and Steeply Sloping Land

- Development which is out of scale or overwhelms the landscape character would be inappropriate.
- Alterations and extensions to dwellings should have appropriate regard to the character of the existing dwelling, in particular to ensure that the scale and design is sympathetic and respects the character of the original dwelling and its setting in the landscape.
- Consider how cumulatively development (not necessarily of the same type) can have an increased impact on the characteristics of the landscape.
- Ensure the design of new development, or extensions to existing development, reflect the local vernacular using locally occurring materials. In particular ensure that texture, colour and shade etc. are sympathetic to and in keeping with adjacent areas.
- Retain field pattern, maintain management of Cornish hedges, farmed land and grassland.
- Light pollution should be minimised, through appropriate design in new development.
- Coastal Path to be regularly maintained, re- routed as necessary.
- There are properties on the coastline which are beyond the coastal protection works. Adequate protection work should be commissioned to ensure that further coastal erosion does not lead to the loss of these properties.

- Encourage the retention of narrow lanes as widening and straightening would detract from their character; minimise damage to Cornish hedges, trees and historic features – repair and replace any features which are lost.



Steeply sloping land in LDU122

LDU 150 Landscape Type: Valley Bottom, Intermediate Sloping Land and Steeply Sloping Land

- The area is within the AONB, parts are within the Loe Pool SSSI and woodlands are managed under countryside stewardship. Habitats should be managed to maximise their wildlife benefit, e.g. hedges flailed at the correct time of year, forestry work carried out over winter and controlling invasive species to prevent them from spreading.
- Species of particular note and concern are bats, barn owls and otters, all of which rely on the habitats found in this LDU and also minimal disturbance from humans.
- It is important that public access within this area remains open as it is a valuable recreational resource for the local community. It is also a green link between the two communities of Helston and Porthleven and a wild space for all to enjoy.
- Penrose was donated to the Trust with the covenant that it would be kept a place of tranquillity, so this must be respected and considered in any future development.
- Ensure the removal of woodland, which is a characteristic feature of the sheltered valley, is not undertaken.
- Encourage the management and where appropriate the extension of broad leaf woodlands.
- Encourage the retention of narrow lanes as widening and straightening would detract from their character; minimise damage to Cornish hedges, trees and historic features – repair and replace any features which are lost.



Intermediate sloping land in LDU150

LDU 153 Landscape Type: Valley Bottom and Steeply Sloping Land

- Loe Pool Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is currently listed as being in unfavourable condition due to the eutrophic state of the water. Water quality needs to be improved. Any building and/or development in the catchment is likely to have an impact in terms of surface water runoff, although the area immediately next to the Loe is protected National Trust land. Maintaining and extending the woodland and scrub boundary between productive farmland and the shoreline will help to soak up any run-off, including nutrient rich water from farmland.
- The Loe and surrounding wetland will benefit from some of the flood defence works that have been undertaken. This work may also bring more benefits



Valley bottom LDU153

and opportunities for public access in certain places, such as improved boardwalks through the wetland.

LDU 121 Landscape Type: Valley Bottom, Intermediate Sloping Land and Steeply Sloping Land

- The harbour is a significant structure and focal point of the town. The harbour walls that have been repointed to protect against storms are grade II listed and must be preserved.
- The Porthleven Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy document should be updated and adopted to ensure that development carried out in the historic part of the town is sympathetic to what is already there.
- Development which is out of scale or overwhelms the landscape pattern and character would be inappropriate.
- Alterations and extensions to dwellings should have appropriate regard to the character of the existing dwelling, in particular to ensure that the scale and design respects the character of the original dwelling and its setting in the landscape.
- Consider how cumulatively development (not necessarily of the same type) can have an increased impact on the characteristics of the landscape.
- Ensure the design of new development or extensions to existing development reflect the local vernacular using locally occurring materials.
- Consider the direction of the slope and nature of the setting when assessing the impact of future development; as in the areas with steeply sloping land there is potential for substantial impacts on land facing the development.
- On higher more exposed ground the vegetation will take longer to establish and reach a height to screen development. Large trees also may not be a characteristic of this more exposed landscape.
- The streams that run through Treza valley carry run off water from higher ground inland and are partially blocked from severe hedge cutting, this is a flood plain and these streams must be kept clear.
- Agricultural buildings should not be located on the western ridge, where they would become prominent and would detract from the setting of Porthleven.
- Footpaths are important to give people access to the outlying countryside and the upkeep of these bridleways and footpaths must be maintained.
- The Bridleway from Little Antron to Torleven Road is totally impassable and should be cleared.
- Retain field pattern, maintain management of Cornish hedges, farmed land and grassland.
- Light pollution should be minimised, through appropriate design in new development.



Steeply sloping land within LDU121

LDU 290 Landscape Type: Elevated Plateau and Intermediate Sloping Land

- The nature of the high open ground means the prominence of any development in this landscape, whose dominant characteristic is the elevated plateau, will increase. Detailed consideration will need to be given to the siting and design of any such development.
- Locating development on prominent ridge or sky lines, particularly skylines with distinctive historic or cultural should be avoided.
- Development which does not follow the undulating character of the topography, or is out of scale or overwhelms the landscape pattern and character, would have an adverse impact and would not be supported.
- Alterations and extensions to dwellings should have appropriate regard to the character of the existing dwelling, in particular to ensure that the scale and design respects the character of the original dwelling and its setting in the landscape.
- Consider how cumulatively development (not necessarily of the same type) can have an increased impact competing with the characteristics of the landscape, and creating clutter.
- Ensure new features match the local vernacular using locally occurring materials.
- On higher more exposed ground the vegetation will take longer to establish and reach a height to screen development. Large trees also may not be a characteristic of this more exposed Character Type.
- Consider how light pollution can be minimised, through appropriate design, in new development.
- Encourage the retention of narrow lanes as widening and straightening would detract from their character; minimise damage to Cornish hedges, trees and historic features – repair and replace any features which are lost.



Looking north from Porthleven along the elevated plateau

Chapter 4 The Importance of the Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan Landscape

- 4.1 Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) area includes part of the South Coast Western section of the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Its landscape is recognised to be of national importance and there is a duty to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. This landscape is given the highest level of protection, the same protection as awarded to our National Parks. The National Planning Framework in paragraph 14 establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, that is granting planning permission unless specific policies in the framework indicate development should be restricted. This restriction applies to development impacting upon the AONB. Therefore, there is no presumption in favour of development where there is a conflict with AONB policies. Paragraph 115 in the framework establishes the need for ‘great weight’ to be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB. Therefore, it is critical in decision making in the AONB that the appropriate weight is attached to conserving and enhancing the protected landscape. Thereby, the need to appropriately ‘understand’ the landscape for decision makers is paramount.
- 4.2 The Penrose Estate that is managed by the National Trust also forms an essential part of the special character of the landscape found within the Porthleven NDP area.
- 4.3 The preparation of a Local Landscape Character Assessment for Porthleven NDP area provides the opportunity to gain the views of local people; in order to gain a better understanding of what they value about their landscape and what is important to them. It has been recognised that how people view, value and enjoy the landscape is broadly based on a range of factors. These for most people would include a combination of the following:

- Landscape and scenic quality
- Historical and nature conservation interests
- Recreation value
- Perceptions, memories and associations

A public consultation event was held on the 3rd September 2015 and local people were asked their views on what they valued in the landscape. The results are attached (Appendix 4) and the response to the two exercises that were undertaken is summarised below:

4.4 Questionnaire

4.4.1 A range of questions were asked and below is a brief summary of the results:

What positive changes do you think could be made to improve the landscape and environment of your area?

The answers to this question were diverse and covered many aspects but there were still some subjects that were dominant. Of the 54 people who answered the question 20 people referred to building or wanting no change typical statements were “I like it as it is”, “No more houses on skyline areas” and “Do not build houses in the conservation area”. 19 people commented on green spaces and the natural environment. “More trees and woodland”, “I love the natural landscape, Loe Pool and Cliffs”. Participants mentioned the need for tidying up the Town with comments such as “kerb and pavement weed control, less dog fouling”. A small number of people commented on parking and facilities for young people “I, think that children and adolescents should be given more opportunities for activities in their free time, especially adolescents.”

4.4.2 ***What changes have happened to the local landscape that you do not like?***

There was a consistent trend in the answers to this question. Out of the 50 people who answered this question, 28 had negative comments regarding the new Shrubberies Estate and 14 were against building on the skyline.

4.4.3 ***Looking to the future, what changes do you envisage would have the greatest negative effect on the landscape of your area?***

The vast majority of the responses to this question state that building and development would have the greatest negative effect on the areas landscape. A total of 48 out of 53 responded by highlighting that building and development would have the greatest negative effect.

Some typical responses

“unsympathetic buildings”. “Large scale development in the wrong place”. “Large affordable homes that go beyond the affordability of local people”, “Any more development spreading out of the village will ruin our landscape as we know it”. “We are essentially a small fishing village, not a town, but if development is allowed to continue, Porthleven will lose this” and “building on AONB’s”.

4.4.4 ***Which aspects of the landscape do you consider the most important to be conserved?***

People were asked to rate in order aspects of the landscape the result in descending order are:

Footpaths/bridleways/cycleways – Wildlife and nature conservation – Undeveloped coast – Ridges and skylines – Trees and woodland – Farming landscape – Historic and cultural features – Estate and parkland – Cornish hedges and hedgerows – Green open space, sport/recreation facilities/playing fields – Beaches – Water features.

4.4.5 ***Where in your local area would you take a visitor to enjoy the landscape and why?***

Everyone had their favourite spot where they would take a visitor with a large amount of people choosing the coast. Some preferred the wrestling fields and coast path to Rinsey on the west side of Porthleven whilst others enjoyed the coastal path to the east and Loe Bar which was a special location for many. Other people took great pleasure from the harbour area and a large section preferred the inland experience of the Penrose estate.

4.4.6 ***Where in your local area would you go for outdoor recreation and why?***

Of the 53 who responded to this question 22 selected Penrose estate some just for the views and sounds of nature others enjoyed diverse activities walking, cycling, jogging, photography, bird and nature watching. 21 people mentioned the cliffs and coastal paths for the natural beauty and spectacular views whilst also enjoying the following activities walking, photography, cycling, dog walking and bird and nature watching some have spotted Choughs on the cliff tops. Many people enjoy the harbour and beach for swimming, kayaking, canoeing, gig rowing and the coffee shops around the harbour.

4.4.7 ***Which historic and cultural aspects do you consider important to conserve in your area and why?***

People were asked to rate in order historical and cultural aspects the results in descending order are:

- Porthleven Conservation Area
- Harbours and quays
- Other historic features
- Historic houses and listed buildings
- Milestones and way signs
- Churches and Chapels
- Scheduled Monuments.

4.5 **Map of Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan Area**

- 4.5.1 People were also asked to put different coloured dots on a map of Porthleven parish to depict 'what makes the landscape of Porthleven important'. The coloured spot was put on the area/place that was considered to be special. Different colours were used to show why it was felt to be a special place; the list of categories included recreational value, historical interest, natural and wildlife interest, good views and where you can "get away for it all". The results are shown on the map (Plan 4)

4.5.2 These results did show a pattern, with the majority of special places being located on the coast, Loe Pool and the Penrose Estate. The reason why places were valued are broadly summarised below:

- Recreational value – There were three areas where people largely spent their leisure time; the coast, Treza valley to the west of Porthleven where the sports ground is situated and the footpath network serving the Penrose Estate. The other areas that were selected for their recreational use were the Harbour and The Moors recreation area and the play area to the south of Porthleven village behind the shipyard. Coastal areas out to sea were also shown which would be used for surfing and fishing.
- Historical interest - The Harbour was the area mainly highlighted for its historic value. Other areas in the village were the historic housing on Low Bar Road and the coast to the west, and older housing at Harbourside. Outside the village of Porthleven the areas that were important to local people because of their historic interest were Methleigh Farm and the Penrose Estate.
- Natural and wildlife interest - Again the coast, the Penrose Estate and Loe Pool were considered to be very important for natural and wildlife features, in particular the woodland area at Loe Pool and the coast adjoining Porthleven and to the west of the village. The other areas important for their natural features and wildlife were parts of the valley to the west of Porthleven, the open land above Breageside and the land to the north of ‘Tregew’ on the parish boundary.
- Good views - These were predominantly on higher ground on the ridges, and along the coast where good views are achieved across the sea. The National Trust land at Higher Penrose, where a new footpath network has been provided, featured as the most popular area for viewpoints. Also, within Porthleven a significant number of viewpoints were selected, including the cemetery, the housing area to the south of Porthleven, that is located on steeply rising land and the Harbour.
- Where you “get away from it all” – the most popular were those accessible by foot in the Porthleven Parish on the coast, especially to the west of Porthleven village, and the footpath network serving the Penrose Estate and Loe Bar were shown to provide many favourite places. The coastal waters to the west of Porthleven used for surfing were also shown. St Elvan settlement and the woodland at Antron were also highlighted, and the area in the vicinity of Sunset Farm to the east of the village.

4.6 **Future Consultation**

The results of the public consultation event that was held on the 3rd September 2015 *provide* an understanding of how local people value the landscape of Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan area. As the Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan is taken forward there will further opportunities to build on this picture of what is valued in the landscape. The Public Consultation event that takes place on the Draft Porthleven

Neighbourhood Development Plan will provide another opportunity for the community to give their views.

Chapter 5: Porthleven Village Character Assessment

5.1 As part of the wider study of the character of the local landscape an assessment has been made by volunteers of the character of the village of Porthleven (Appendix 7). The purpose of the report is to provide a description of Porthleven in order to prepare guidance in the NDP on how to manage change and place making. In order to undertake the assessment of the village character Porthleven was divided into 8 areas with common characteristics (Plan no. 5). The volunteers looked at for each area, the history and evolution, setting in the wider landscape, village character, settlement edge, and key qualities and issues the results of this assessment are provided in Appendix 7. The preparation of this report is ongoing and information/observations from the public are needed to complete this work. At the public consultation event on the 3rd September responses from residents were gathered on the key issues and qualities found within Porthleven. A summary of these responses is included in Appendix 7.

5.2 Key Issues and Qualities of Porthleven Village

Outlined below are the key qualities and key issues that are considered by local people to influence and affect Porthleven Village. Those in *italics* are a summary of the key qualities and issues provided in the Porthleven Village Character Assessment; followed by the consultation response to the key issues.



Local People populating a map of the village with Key qualities and Key issues

Area 1 – Harbour



Key Qualities:

- *Focal point for the village*
- *Historic and iconic buildings*
- *Boats used for fishing or pleasure moor in the Harbour - Key Issues:*
- *Changing from a working environment to an area of holiday and leisure use*
- *Traffic congestion*
- *Impact of future development in this area on harbour's character and setting*

Consultation Response on Key Issues for Harbour area

- Preservation of green remaining around harbour and green land generally.
- Do not use the outfall to dispose of sewerage.
- Light pollution in Harbour area from restaurants mainly. Very distracting.
- Stop trying to change our fishing village.
- No more modern builds around our Harbour. We should be proud of how it is now not trying to 'improve' it.
- Ensuring important historical buildings around the harbour are protected and listed in some cases. Even Coastguard cottages are not.
- Stop unsympathetic development around the harbour. Not against new business but should be in character.
- Keep "new builds" in keeping with existing architecture- current plans and proposals are not doing this.
- Residents parking is a key issue. All new developments must have own off-road parking which does not deplete existing space.
- Residents parking is increasingly difficult. Restaurants and visitors need designated parking area outside of town.

Area 2 – Seaside section of Porthleven Conservation Area



Key Qualities:

- 'Old fishing village' buildings and the imposing Victorian properties makes it very special
- Coastal walk to Loe Bar

Key Issues:

- Long term conservation of this area is dependent upon the effectiveness of the sea defence and the damaging results of 'super' storms
- High proportion of properties are holiday lets and second homes – if this business use declines it would have an impact
- Development needs to be sympathetic to the character of the area

Consultation Response on Key issues for Seaside Section of Porthleven Conservation Area

- No more restaurants or cafés. Need businesses that are not seasonal.
- Ensure historical buildings are protected and listed where necessary. No unnecessary development.
- Cars are a big issue we are saturated in the summer. The biggest complaint is 'locals cannot get into their own village'. Can that be addressed or is it a price we pay for being a tourist destination.
- Should the conservation area be widened to encompass buildings around the Loe Bar and further out from harbour. ☐ Reasonable garages to rent.

Area 3 – Gravesend, Highburrow and beyond



Key Qualities:

- An area of openness – light airy spaces between or in front/rear of properties, although no actual recreational play spaces are sited in this area.
- Gardens to fronts and rears.
- Some properties will have sea views or at least some glimpses.

Key Issues:

- Coastal erosion and super storms
- Impact on the character of the village and its setting of further expansion to the east of Porthleven; both on the coast and inland above the 60-65m contour
- Appearance of former quarry

Consultation	Response on Key Issues for Gravesend, Highburrow and Beyond.
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|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Porthleven needs to maintain a balance between tourism/income and a healthy local community.• Porthleven is fast becoming a town without the services to support it.• Over development will affect character. Otherwise Porthleven will be joined to Helston eventually.• Too much emphasis on new build affordable housing.• Shrubberies Road to Penrose estate is now worse and dangerous. |
|--|--|

- Too much traffic on the route from Penrose to the Shrubberies dangerous!
- Shrubberies development has spoilt the views and is too big.
- Mixture of old historical development and new buildings not always popular.
- Shrubberies development is on the ridgeline and ruins the setting of the village. Can be seen from Penzance.

Area 4 – Village section of Conservation Area



Key Qualities:

- Heart of the old village that has experienced little change
- This part of the village has retained its old-world charm and reflects the character of a 19th century Cornish fishing village

Key Issues:

- Development needs to be sensitive to the character of the Conservation Area; especially if infill sites come forward
- Traffic and congestion are a great problem in this area, which is characterised by narrow streets and has no garaging
- Flooding has been a problem in the past

Consultation	Response on Key issues for Village Section of Conservation Area
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|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not need another community building whilst the big buildings we have, make access better. • People not giving way in their cars. • Fore Street parking. Suggest no parking May to September. • Would like to see a few disabled parking bays close to the chemist. There are none at all in Fore Street. |
|--|---|

Rubbish bins during the summer need emptying more often to stop seagulls pulling things out. The Town warden needs to earn his/her money!

- Stop parking on double yellow lines (Post Office) and loading bays!

Area 5 – Horseshoe Estate



Key Qualities:

- Estate is not a 'through route' so traffic levels low
- A well-established residential area with a positive community spirit
- Good access to open space; including two parks

Key Issues:

- New development to the east of this area has impacted on traffic levels
- No shops serving the estate and no public transport serving the Boslan estate
- The elevated land to the west of Horseshoe is important to the character of this area

Consultation Response on Key Qualities for Horseshoe Estate

- ☑ The parks are excellent and the top park since being renovated is fantastic.
- Cars driving too fast through housing estates.
- Housing is important for local people but is of no use unless truly affordable for rent and purchase.
- Too much reliance on driving children to school, Porthleven is small and exercise is good.
- Footpath and cycleway to Penrose.
- Don't feed the seagulls.
- Shrubberies Hill to B3304 needs widening especially since Shrubberies development.
- The Western ridgeline is visible from all of Porthleven and should NOT be built on.

Area 6 – Boslan



Key Qualities:

- Different types and ages of development blend together well
- Quite peaceful, not a lot of traffic or industrial noise
- Boslan estate has a spacious feel; the open space in the centre is an asset and a focal point

Key Issues:

- Gibson Way, which has not been designed as a 'through route' provides access to development to the north of the village
- Parking within the roads affects the movement of traffic
- The elevated plateau above provides the setting for this part of the village

Consultation Response Key Issues for Boslan

- Traffic everywhere has more cars-parking problems-maybe one-way traffic system.
- Gibson Way accident waiting to happen.

Area 7 – Methleigh Park



- Quiet part of the village with views over the cemetery and open countryside
- Parking and traffic not a problem
- Large open recreational area popular with adults, teenagers and families

Key Issues:

- Overflow parking may be a problem while there are football and bowling matches being played

Consultation Response on Key qualities for Methleigh Park

- The Park is excellent for young children. A swimming Pool/ Tennis court would be a lovely addition for locals and tourists.
- Porthleven itself is special, no changes should be made.
- There have been attempts by Porthleven Town Council to open Methleigh Parc for through traffic into the recreation ground and Harbour Head. This must never happen.
- Ensure estate roads remain quiet and no rat runs.
- Maintain Park for children.
- Flooding along Methleigh Bottoms.
- We are fast becoming over urbanised, without the infrastructure which might just make that more bearable.
- The Skate Park must be reinstated to provide for the young people of Porthleven.

Area 8 – Treza and Penponds



Key Qualities:

- Area peaceful with not a lot of traffic, with the exception of school times, or industrial noise
- All the properties have gardens and the residents can enjoy their outside space
- Views of Methleigh Farm and open countryside creates a feeling of openness
- Methleigh Bottom is an open space enjoyed by many people

Key Issues:

- Traffic generated and parking around the school at the beginning and end of the day.
- Although there is open space at Methleigh Bottoms there is no other public green spaces within a reasonable walking distance
- Contribution that the rural setting to the west makes to the character of this area

Consultation Response on Key Qualities for Treza and Penponds

- Good parking and low traffic.
- Japanese knotweed in amenity area bordering Methleigh bridleway.
- Penponds Road parking on bends.
- Lack of buses using the estate, bus needed to go along Tolponds Road.
- Concerns regarding potential of increased traffic if development happens to the east.
- Allocate free dog run area as they use all 3 parks and don't always pick up mess.
- Limit second homes and more affordable housing needed. We need to keep local people in the village.

Chapter 6 - The Relationship between the Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) and the Porthleven Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) –

6.1 How the Local Landscape Character Assessment links to the Neighbourhood Development Plan policies

Porthleven Council recognises the great importance of retaining and enhancing the local landscape character and to protect the uniqueness of Porthleven Town and Parish. The LLCA divides Porthleven parish into various landscape types and areas. These have then been assessed, using an evidence-based methodology to determine the most suitable places for any proposed development which will cause the least impact to the environment and natural beauty of the area. The evidence and results of the LLCA has been used by the Porthleven Steering Group to inform and develop its policies.

6.1.1 The current position on policy development in the plan will be outlined – the Vision and Objectives for Porthleven will be set down.

Porthleven LLCA underpins the NDP vision and objectives using the LLCA evidence-based approach allowed the PNP steering group to demonstrate robustly the siting and environmental implications of any development in the Porthleven Parish. These decisions were re-enforced by the "Site Allocation" process. The LLCA is a 'corner stone' of the NDP objectives and was fundamental in their development. The LLCA, through the PNP vision, objectives and policies, clearly demonstrates why the environment of Porthleven is important to its residents.

6.2 How the Porthleven LLCA can be used to inform planning decisions:

Proposals for development will be supported where they have shown that they conform with LLCA. Existing field patterns and traditional old hedges and lanes should be retained where possible. Encourage development on appropriate sites and preserve the open character of our countryside.

All development:

- should be sympathetic to the surrounding vista, avoiding skyline development and light pollution.
- should avoid removal of mature trees and hedge rows and encourage re-planting in suitable areas to maintain the natural fauna and wildlife.
- should not intrude or compromise sites of historic, archaeological or cultural interest or detract from loved or well-visited views.
- must adhere to the strict national guidelines regarding sewerage, surface and foul water run-off and all other services requirements

6.2.1 Future proposed development in Porthleven NDP area can be assessed against a LLCA policy in the plan. The Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment provides a description of the landscape for the Porthleven NDP area (Chapter 3 and Appendices 3 and 5). This provides a list of key characteristics and a detailed description of their landscape features and attributes. In addition, details are provided of 'Pressures and Forces for Change' and an assessment has been made of 'Land Management and Development Considerations'. The Local Landscape Character Assessment, and in particular, the Land Management and Development Considerations should be used when proposals come forward for development in Porthleven Plan.

6.2.2 The landscape management and development guidance outlined in Chapter 3 supports the position taken forward in the National Planning Framework. As outlined below:

- Paragraph 14 – there is no presumption in favour of development that conflicts with AONB policies
- Paragraph 55 – To promote sustainable development in rural area
- Paragraph 58 – To set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area; specific reference is made to the need to respond to local character Paragraph 60 – To promote local distinctiveness
- Paragraph 99 – Taking into account climate change, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape
- Paragraph 109 – To enhance the natural environment
- Paragraph 114 – To maintain the character of the undeveloped coast
- Paragraph 115 - The need for 'great weight' to be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB.
- Paragraph 123 – To protect areas of tranquillity
- Paragraph 125 – To limit the impact of light pollution

6.2.3 Guidance that can be used to assess landscape character when development proposals are under consideration is available (Appendix 7 Judging Landscape Capacity - A Development Management Toolkit). This development management toolkit was adopted by Cornwall Council on the 16th October 2014 and will be used by the Council for the assessment of development proposals. The Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment 2007 provides the county wide landscape assessment for the whole of Cornwall and this will be used, as the evidence base, to inform this process. The preparation of the Porthleven Local Landscape Character Assessment enables a local resource, based on involvement of the local community as volunteers and specialists, to be used in the Porthleven NDP area. In the future when proposals come forward for development in Porthleven, the sensitivity of the landscape and its capacity to accommodate development, can be assessed using this community based local assessment of the landscape.

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