

Mabe Landscape Statment



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Section 1 – Background to the assessment

1.1 Creating the Mabe Landscape Statement

1.1.1 Mabe Parish Council realise the importance of retaining and enhancing landscape character to protect the local distinctiveness of the area. In drafting the Mabe Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Strategic Group were aware of the increasing pressure for new development and the difficulties of siting development in the most appropriate locations. It was realised that to be able to retain the distinctive local character whilst allowing development, it would be vital to record the elements and features which come together to create the present landscape character of the Parish of Mabe, and its unique sense of place. Once this detail had been gathered it would then be possible to assess how new development proposals could positively or negatively affect the local landscape.

1.1.2 The Strategic Group met with Kath Statham, Landscape Architect from Cornwall Council's Public Open Space Team on 5th March 2020 to discuss how the local landscape character could be described to underpin their policies within their Neighbourhood Development Plan. This landscape Statement provides a desk-based overview of the character of the Parish, building on the landscape character description in the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment.

1.1.3 This Landscape Statement can also be of use in

- defining the elements of character which give Mabe its sense of place and local distinctiveness
- informing decisions regarding the environmental suitability of new development in the Parish
- celebrating what is important about the local landscape
- identifying future development pressures
- enable positive planning, objectively guiding the right development in the right place
- contributing to the evidence base to support policy within the Neighbourhood Development Plan
- helping to set priorities for future land management

Section 2 – Landscape Character Assessment

2.1 What is landscape character assessment?

Landscape is about the relationship between people and place, and is the setting for our lives. The Cornish landscape is unique, stunning, diverse, and a major economic asset which provides

- economic value - often becoming a central factor in attracting business and tourism,
- social and community value as an important part of people's lives, contributing to our sense of identity and well-being, and bringing enjoyment and inspiration,
- environmental value as a home for wildlife and a cultural record of society's use of the land.

Through landscape character assessment we can gain an understanding of what elements of the character are important and have value, to help in the decision-making process.

2.1.1 The European Landscape Convention¹ came into force in the UK in March 2007. It establishes the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies. The Convention defines landscape as

"...an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors"

The Convention is clear that all landscapes matter, not just those covered by designation and places emphasis on the whole landscape and all its values recognising that landscapes are dynamic, and the character is forever changing. The ELC will remain in place after the UK leaves the EU in 2020. The Convention promotes:

- the identification and assessment of landscape
- improved consideration of landscape in existing and future policy and regulation

2.1.2 The landscape of Cornwall is very important to residents and visitors alike. For many years books have been written and paintings created centring on this wonderful landscape of scenic beauty, cultural heritage and high ecological value.

2.1.3 Landscape character assessment is a tool to help understand what the landscape is like today, how it has come to be like that, and how it may change in the future. Its role is to help ensure that change and development does not undermine whatever is characteristic or valued about any particular landscape.

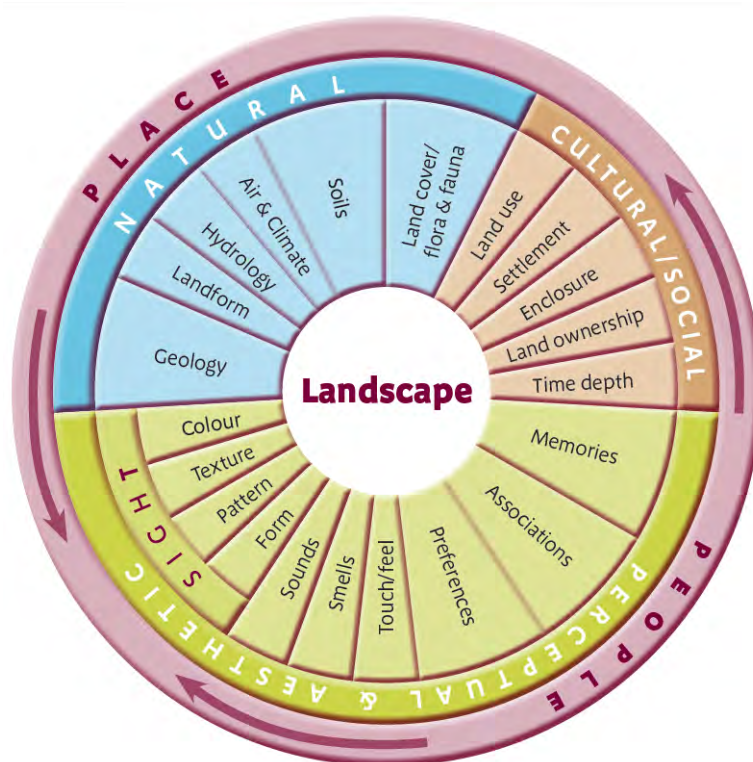
2.1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes policies that require consideration of the character and special qualities of the area when making planning decisions. It requires great weight to be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and AONBs, and to protect valued landscapes. It promotes use of Landscape Character

¹ Council of Europe (2000) European Landscape Convention, Florence, October 2000

Assessments and expects local plans to build on a strong environmental evidence base. Landscape is a strategic planning issue on which there is a duty for local planning authorities to co-operate. Neighbourhood Plans provide an ideal opportunity to identify, conserve and enhance landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place. A Neighbourhood Plan should contain clear and logical connections between landscape evidence and related policies. This Landscape Statement provides a factual description of the landscape character of the parish (outside the settlements) explaining the unique combinations of elements and features, which come together to create a sense of place and local distinctiveness.

2.1.5 There are many elements which come together to give us the landscape we see and appreciate, illustrated by the Landscape Wheel² below. The landscape's physical geology and hydrology affect the soils, which are also influenced by climate, land cover and flora and fauna. The landscape is not static. Our human influence over time through land use, enclosure, cultivation and development make distinct patterns which vary across Cornwall. As well as the physical elements, how we perceive the landscape is an important element of character. Our memories, senses and associations are all personal to us and allow us to perceive the landscape individually, so the landscape is far more than just what we see.

2.1.6 Landscape character assessment allows us to identify and describe variation in the character of the landscape, to explain unique combinations of elements and features which come together to create Mabe Parish's local distinctiveness and a sense of place.

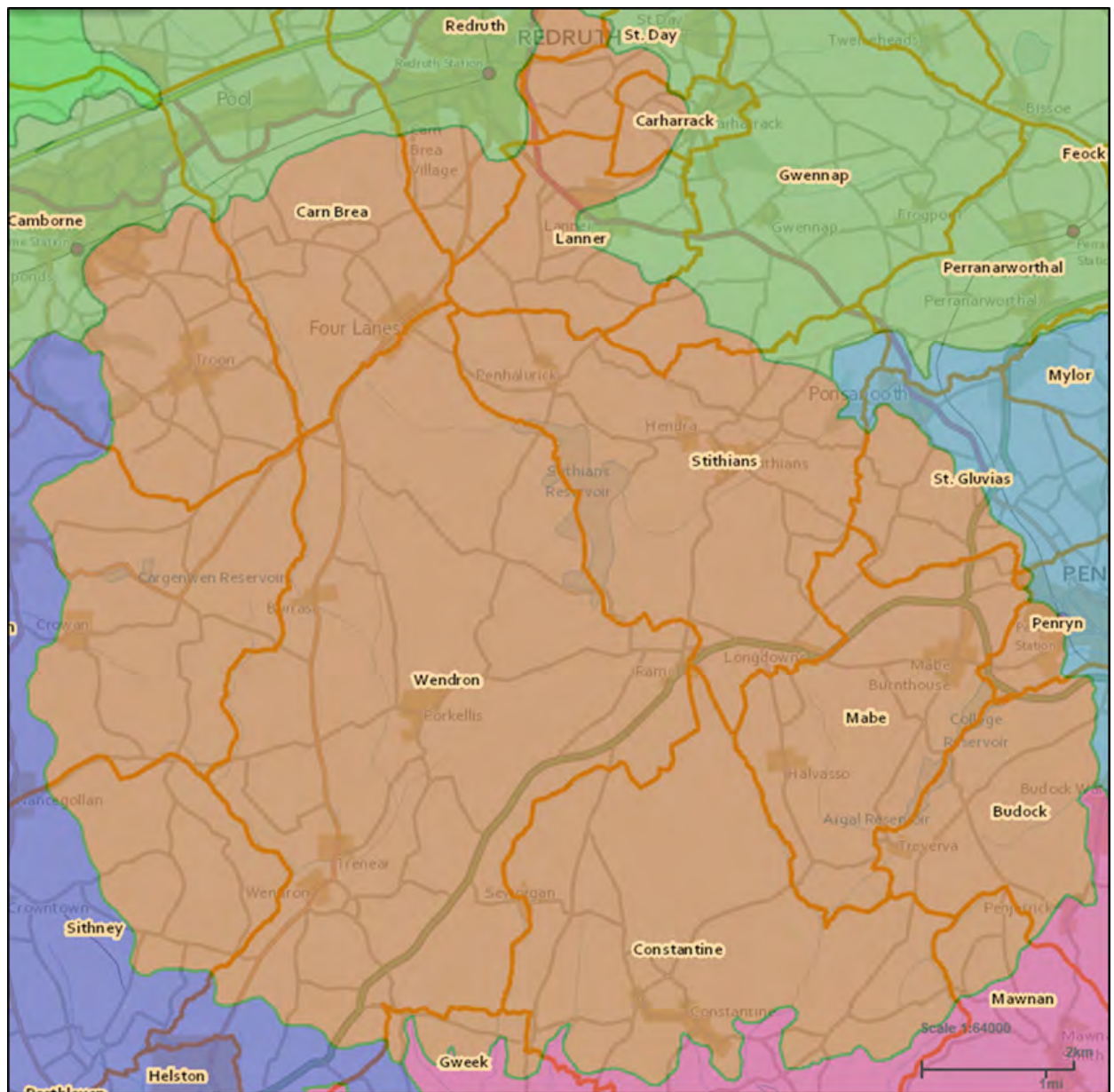


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² Natural England (2014) Approach to Landscape Character Assessment

³ Extract from 2004 Natural England – An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment

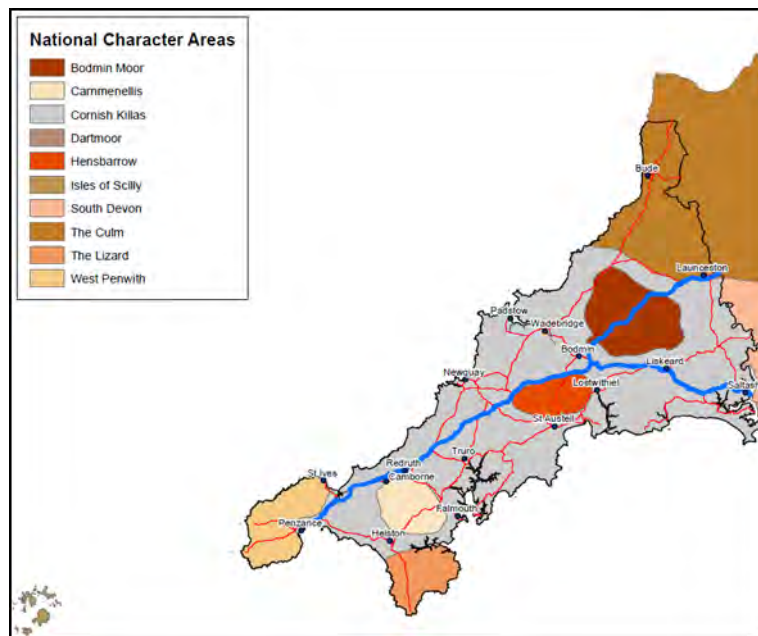
- 2.1.7 Landscape Character Assessment takes common headings such as topography, land cover, field pattern, historic features and describes the character of the area under these common 'attribute' headings.
- 2.1.8 The hierarchy of landscape assessment in Cornwall is as follows
- National Character Areas (NCA) created by Natural England and the parish lies in NCA 155 – Carnmenellis with a very small area in the north east of the parish lying in NCA152 – Cornish Killas
 - Landscape Character Areas created by the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment – Cornwall Council
 - Local Landscape Character Assessments and Landscape Statements as part of a Neighbourhood Development Plan
- 2.1.9 The Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment 2007 provides detail of landscape character through 40 Landscape Character Areas (LCA). Each of these 40 LCAs is a geographically discrete area which has a 'sense of place' and a distinct pattern of elements that makes one landscape different from another. Each LCA is accompanied by a detailed description of the character of the landscape.
- 2.1.10 The Parish of Mabe is covered by one landscape Character Area (CA) CA10 – Carmenellis (see map overleaf). However, the detailed description for this landscape character area covers an area much larger than the Parish of Mabe stretching to Redruth in the north, Constantine in the south, Budock Water in the east and Crowan in the west. It therefore does not provide sufficient detail relating to the parish of Mabe to underpin policies relating to landscape character. For this reason, the Mabe NDP Strategic Group wished to create a Landscape Statement to build on the strategic detail included in the 2007 Landscape Character description for CA10.



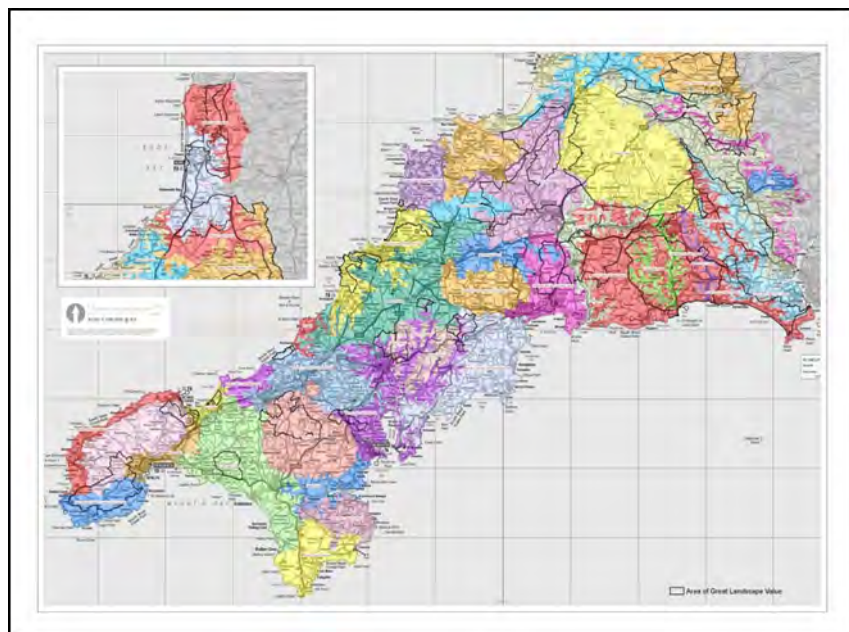
Overall extent of CA10 - Carnmenellis

2.2 The Mabe Landscape Statement

- 2.2.1 This Landscape Statement (LS) provides an overview of the qualities of the landscape which are important to conserve and enhance to retain the unique locally distinct sense of place of this Parish.
- 2.2.2 This assessment provides landscape character detail from a desk-based assessment of the local landscape character of the parish of Mabe, and is structured to also show the relevant detail from both the National Character Areas (Natural England) and Cornwall Landscape Character Area descriptions (Cornwall Council 2007).

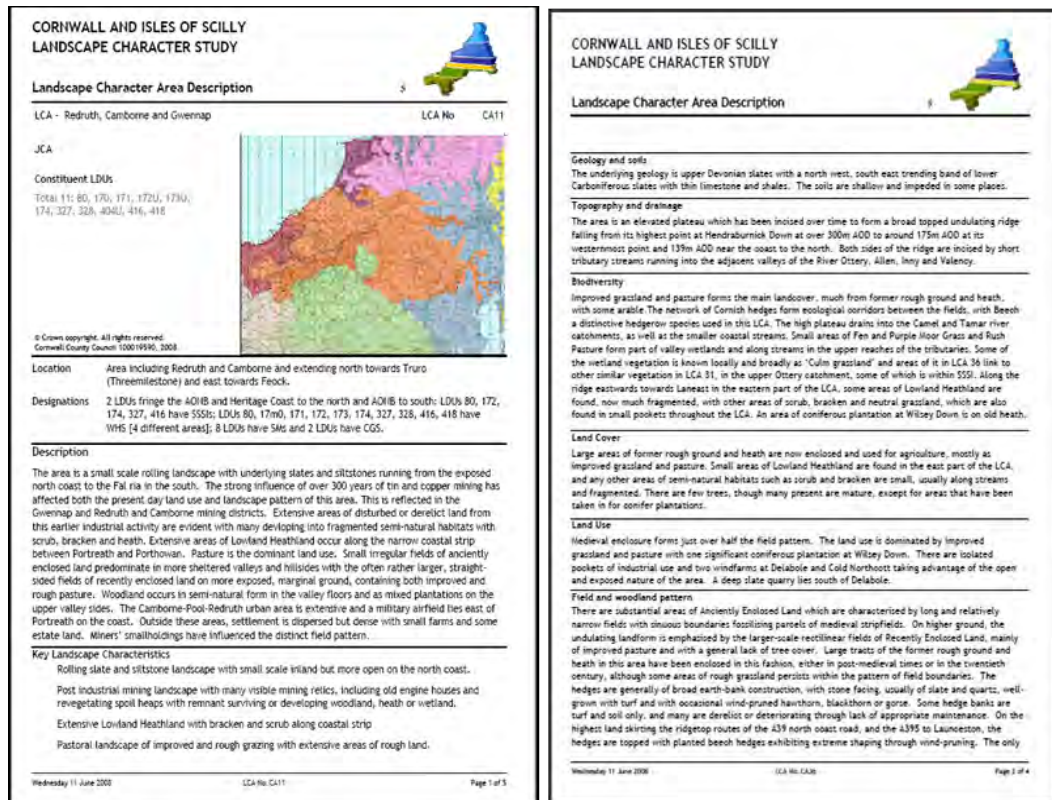


Natural England's 9 National Character Areas across Cornwall



Cornwall Council's 40 Landscape Character Areas across Cornwall

2.2.3 Each of the 40 Landscape Character Areas is supported by a landscape description and each of these descriptions uses the same 'attribute' headings to describe the landscape. This LS also uses these 'attribute' headings to describe the landscape of the Mabe parish. This way there is a clear and robust link between the Cornwall-wide assessment and this more detailed local assessment. The mapping to support these descriptions can be found in Appendix 1 - Maps 1-10.



Example of landscape description for each of the 40 Landscape Character Areas

2.2.4 This LS is a record of factual detail only, not whether features and elements of the character are good or bad, appropriate or badly designed. This way the LS is an objective factual document. The detail of the more subjective aspects of the assessment, looking at what and where the local community value and feel is important in the Parish, would come through public consultation.

Section 3 – Mabe Parish Landscape Description

The following 15 'attribute' headings are taken from the 2007 Landscape Character Assessment (2007 LCA) to provide a robust link to the strategic Cornwall wide landscape character assessment. This section describes the local landscape of the Parish of Mabe through a desk-top assessment (with added text by members of Mabe NDP Group based on local knowledge and research) and is then supplemented in the boxes below by relevant text taken from:

- a. CA10 – Carnmenellis 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment- Cornwall Council
- b. NCA 155 - Carnmenellis National Character Area Profile – Natural England

- 3.1 Key characteristics – for the Parish of Mabe the key landscape character considerations are:
- Working quarries at Carnsew and Chywoon, and significant remains of flooded disused quarries
 - Farmland used for arable crops, permanent pasture (mainly for cattle) and rough grazing
 - A strong sense of place derived from the ancient irregular field pattern bordered by Cornish hedges of Anciently Enclosed Land
 - Few hedgerow trees on plateau and narrow areas of woodland (mostly Wet Woodland) in valleys
 - Extensive biodiverse habitats and County Wildlife Sites (CWS) linked by Cornish hedges
 - High level of tranquillity with experiences of exposure on the open ridges and dark night skies
 - Dispersed settlement pattern of isolated farms and small clusters of houses
 - Long views from elevated areas
- 3.2 Visions and Objectives
- a. Maintain the quiet and relatedly undisturbed agricultural character of the Parish.
 - b. Protect from development and avoid the loss of Cornish hedges and look to ensure a net increase in the length of Cornish hedges in the Parish.
 - c. Encourage the protection and enhancement of the landscape character whilst supporting the balance of new development, agriculture and other associated business uses.
 - d. Ensure an appropriate level of housing which is developed in a way to enhance local landscape character and the relationship of the built environment with the rural character
- 3.3 Geology and soils
- The physiography is hard rock uplands of impoverished soils on igneous rocks leading to Grade 3 agricultural land, and Grade 4 on the lower lying land.

Quarrying for granite has been carried out across the parish for over 100 years. The 1875-1901 mapping shows quarrying to the north of Burnthouse

at Chywoon and Carnsew which are still operational in part today, and redundant quarries to the south west of Longdowns, and the valley to the east and south of Halvosso. These redundant quarries have now been returned to nature and have filled with water. Two quarries at BF Adventure and Kernow Adventure Park have been successfully developed for modern leisure activities.

CA10 - The plateau is formed by a large igneous intrusion (granite boss), which has given this area its distinctive topography and landscape character. Subsequent erosion and soil development has created an upland landscape, with occasional outcrops of granite rock. The soils are impoverished humic soils (organic material derived from partially decomposed plant remains)

NCA 155 - Granite quarrying has influenced the landscape in the south and east, leaving a legacy of rock, waste tips and sheer rock faces. The acidic soils are of poor quality and predominantly gravelly and peaty but with patches of brown earths in the lower-lying parts of the area. The presence of the underlying granite has been the main influence on the form of this landscape. An undulating landform dissected by small streams radiates from the highest points of granite

- 3.4 Topography and drainage – The Parish's topography is made up of upland ridges lying at a maximum height of 180m OD, falling into valleys of differing gradients. The landform generally falls to the east and south east where it meets the low lying land at Argal and College reservoirs. The north south ridge at Halvosso sees the land falling away to the west, as well as the east. (Refer to Map 1 – Appendix 1)

The 1875-1901 mapping shows College Reservoir as standing water, but the area we now know as Argal Reservoir is marshland and woodland. A concrete dam was constructed in 1941 to create Argal Reservoir which now provides a public water supply. Flowing down the eastward facing topography into College or Argal Reservoirs are the following watercourses:

- Mabe Stream
- Lower Spargo Stream
- Argal Stream/River Antron

Lestraines River flows along the western Parish boundary in the valley to the west of the Halvosso ridge and connects with another unnamed watercourse at the south Parish boundary before continuing to flow south to Polwheveral Creek and onto the Helford Estuary.

Treliever Stream runs from west to east across the north of the parish, from Chywoon Quarry, running alongside the A394, under the Treliever roundabout and down through Tremough Dale. It is joined by another stream which forms part of the north-eastern boundary of the Parish at Tremough (Penryn Campus). The combined streams continue to flow broadly east into the Penryn River.

A number of the redundant quarries across the Parish are now flooded. The can be found on Maps 2 and 6 in Appendix 1.

CA10 - This area is an exposed, elevated gently undulating plateau rising to 250m AOD at Carnmenellis Beacon. The land drops away at the edges of the plateau, most steeply on the south eastern side where it dips into the Helford Ria (Landscape Character Area 09). Small streams which drain the plateau become incised and significant at the edges of the granite

3.5 Biodiversity

This is a Parish rich in biodiversity and Map 6 in Appendix 1 shows the varied habitats across the Parish. It is likely that there has been some change since this map was created and further detailed land cover surveys would need to be carried out for any future development. The map does show the rich biodiversity and habitat types around the disused quarries and the two lakes.

Cornish hedges are a key ecological feature creating Green infrastructure for nature across the Parish. Their importance is both in their age and plant species they support, but also in the green corridors and links they create between semi natural habitats and designated areas for wildlife such as County Wildlife Sites. Map 9 in Appendix 1 shows the locations of these hedges and their overall height.

There are a number of County Wildlife Sites (CWS) in the Parish which are the most significant areas for wildlife in Cornwall outside Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Refer to Map 7 – Appendix 1. County Wildlife Sites contain features that are of substantive nature conservation value at a county level of significance:

- Lestraines Moor CWS – 45.8Ha area overall, extending beyond the Mabe Parish. Habitats in the valley bottoms consist of a mosaic of purple moor grass and rush pasture and wet willow woodland, with small areas of mixed broadleaved woodland, beech woodland and scrub along drier parts. Wetland areas include pools and areas of marsh and bog. The hilltop and slopes are dominated by bracken and mixed scrub. A small central disused quarry has associated areas of heathy vegetation and further disused quarries are present at the southern end of the site. Priority wildlife species include Brown long eared bat, otter and badgers
- Halvosso Quarries CWS – 36.2Ha area overall. This valley site incorporates numerous large water-filled disused quarries and a range of wetland and drier scrub habitats. In the northern section wet woodland dominated by grey willow runs along the small stream. Adjacent areas of purple moor grass to the south are interspersed with pools of standing water and support a range of species. Higher quarried areas contain a mosaic of bracken dominated scrub, mixed scrub and heathland. Much of the southern section is grassland (possibly unimproved) with scattered bracken and patches of scrub throughout. The eastern margin includes a strip of woodland and two small areas of fen.
- Falmouth Reservoirs CWS – 87.1Ha overall, extending beyond the Parish boundary. College Reservoir and part of Argal Reservoir are

managed as nature reserves by the South West Lakes Trust, which has produced the South West Lakes Trust Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2012. The site comprises College and Argal Reservoirs and their surrounding habitats. The area is largely managed as a nature reserve and supports a range of wildlife including several species of note. The smaller College Reservoir is bordered by mixed broadleaved woodland and wet willow woodland (Biodiversity Action Plan {BAP}Habitat) supporting diverse fern and bryophyte communities; Argal Reservoir is predominantly surrounded by semi-improved grassland. There are also areas of bracken and gorse scrub and both reservoirs have some emergent vegetation in the shallow waters around their margins.

This combination of woodland and wetland habitats is particularly important for birds, with large numbers of wintering wildfowl such as wigeon, coot, teal, pochard and tufted duck, and gulls such as herring gull and black-headed gull; a variety of passerines including marsh tit, goldcrest, willow warbler and blackcap; large gatherings of migrating sand martins; and the appearance of several rare and scarce species. Priority wildlife species include common toad, marsh Tit, Bulfinch, Song Thrush, Otter, and a number of bat species. Some recent sightings have included pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, Daubenton's, and the rare nathusius pipistrelle. Other notable species: bryophytes include the Nationally Scarce moss *Dicranella crispa* and the Locally Scarce liverwort *Riccardia incurvata*; plant records include Nationally Rare fringed water-lily and Cornwall Rare perfoliate pondweed; ten species of Odonata have been recorded including Locally Scarce black-tailed skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*; many of the birds regularly found here are Amber Listed such as wigeon, tufted duck, pochard, black-headed gull, kingfisher and willow warbler. Badger is present in the woodland (protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992).

- Bosvathick Wood and Croft Plantation CWS – 69.4 Ha extending beyond the Parish. This site consists of a wooded valley running along several small streams which feed into Polwheveral Creek near Constantine. Most of the site is sessile oak-dominated broadleaved woodland (Bosvathick Wood), which has some fine examples of mature trees and contains a rich epiphytic flora. There are also some small areas of coppiced woodland in the northern section. Croft Plantation, on the west facing slope, is co-dominated by sweet chestnut and beech, with a variety of coniferous species. Marginal areas of mixed scrub occur mainly in the south and add diversity to the site. There are also two small areas of fen in the northern arm of the site. Hedges within the site are classified as ancient. BAP Priority Habitat of Upland Oakland, Lowland Fens and Hedgerows. BAP Priority Species include bullfinch, song thrush, and otter. Other notable species: Amber Listed green woodpecker, pipistrelle bats, and badger.

CA10 - The heath and wetland habitats are small and fragmented but most link along the stream valleys to form valuable ecological corridors.

Though the main landcover is improved grassland/pasture with some arable, there are many small fragmented semi-natural habitats at the

head of and along the small stream valleys which arise and drain the Landscape Character Area. These include narrow areas of broadleaved woodland, scrub and bracken with areas of Wet Woodland, Fens and Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture. The network of Cornish hedges form ecological corridors between the farmed land and the semi-natural areas.

NCA 155 - Cornish hedges form wildlife corridors and are an important habitat in their own right

3.6 Land Cover and Land Use

The parish is predominantly arable and pastoral farmland of Grade 3 and 4. (Refer to Map 3 – Appendix 1). Agriculture remains a valuable source of employment in the parish and farming sectors represented include livestock farms (dairy, beef & sheep), arable, horticultural, as well as smaller scale enterprises (to include pig, poultry, llama etc). See Appx XX – Agricultural Overview.

The village of Mabe Burnthouse is located in the east, with the Penryn Campus (formerly Tremough) which is shared by Falmouth University and University of Exeter located on the north eastern boundary.

There are a number of working and disused quarries, two of which are used for recreation.

There are two reservoirs Argal and College lakes managed by the South West Lakes Trust. Argal Reservoir is a popular coarse fishery.

A number of locations across the Parish have been noted for the presence of Japanese Knotweed, a highly invasive plant (refer to Map 2 – Appendix 1). It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to plant or cause Japanese knotweed to grow in the wild. This is enforced by both the Police and local authorities.

There are a number of domestic scale wind turbines in the Parish, and solar and larger scale wind in St Gluvias Parish on the northern boundary.

Map 4 – Appendix 1 shows that the Parish is predominantly Medieval farmland with areas work in later years.

CA10 – The dominant landcover is improved grassland/pasture with arable increasing towards the southern and eastern fringes. Tree cover is limited due to the exposed nature of the plateau. High rainfall and areas of poor drainage have allowed Wet Woodland and wetland to develop in the small stream valleys. The area is predominantly used for pastoral agriculture with some land in rough grazing and most in permanent pasture

3.7 Field and Woodland Pattern

The field pattern in the Parish remains largely unchanged from the 1875-1901 historic map. Few hedges have been removed to increase field sizes, and these changes are largely associated with the village of Mabe

Burnthouse. Fields vary in size, with a small pattern associated with settlements of less than 1 Ha and in the open rural countryside they increase to an average of 2Ha. (Refer to Maps 1-10 – Appendix 1)

These Cornish hedge boundaries are very important ecological features creating green corridors and links between semi natural habitats and designated areas for wildlife such as County Wildlife Sites. Map 9 in Appendix 1 shows the locations of these hedges and their overall height. Hedges are predominantly 2-3m in height with hedges up to and beyond 6m in the more sheltered valleys. In the Bosvathick Wood and Croft Plantation CWS hedges are classified as ancient. It is also possible to determine important old hedges and the trees within them by looking at the 1875-1901 historic mapping (refer to Map 10 – Appendix 1). Here trees which are shown on this map and are still present to this day are likely to be of significant value to landscape character and also biodiversity. Although the historic map does not show many trees in the hedges across the Parish, there are a number in the boundaries on the sheltered eastern facing slopes around the lakes and in the woodland around Helland Mill. There are a number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) associated with the trees on the Tremough campus, as well as a further TPO on a Monterey Cyprus at Little Antron (W2/K14/08/00165/TPO) and an area TPO at Antron Manor W2/K14/059.

An ancient tree is also recorded in the Goodygrane quarry area.

CA10 - The area is open and exposed with few trees on the tops although there are some limited broadleaved plantations in the valley heads and bottoms

The field pattern varies from small fields within a medieval landscape of Anciently Enclosed Land around the fringes of the upland, bounded by sinuous Cornish hedges or hedgerows, to more recent enclosure of former rough ground into strongly rectilinear field patterns

Cornish hedges form a network in the area, some with hedgerows but mainly turf capped stone sided banks.

NCA 155 - Woodland is generally uncommon in the area. The hill tops are treeless but there are small patches of willow carr in damp valleys and deciduous woodlands occur on the deeper valley sides on the western and eastern fringes of the NCA.

Cornish hedges form wildlife corridors and are an important habitat in their own right

3.8 Settlement Pattern

Beyond the village of Mabe Burnthouse there are no other settlements, and buildings are isolated farms and groupings of small numbers of cottages.

CA10 - The settlement pattern is of dispersed farmsteads and small clusters of modest cottages, single or in terraces.

The landscape around Mabe is dominated by a cluster of nineteenth and twentieth century granite quarries and the terraces and cottages associated with them.

NCA 155 - dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets and farmsteads of medieval origin, with villages mainly of recent, industrial origin. The scattered farmhouses, hamlets and village centres normally consist of granite-built houses with slate roofs, whereas newer dwellings from the 1970s and 1980s are often covered with pebbledash.

3.9 Transport Pattern

The Parish largely is accessed via minor roads although the A394 Penryn to Helston road cuts through the northern part of the Parish. The majority of the roads are narrow rural lanes with Cornish hedges as boundaries. The character of the highway network is no street lights or pavements, with limited road signage and little or no road markings. Highways have either a Cornish hedge as a boundary or a narrow grass verge, and have retained their rural character.

There is a good network of public rights of way (PROW) across the Parish (Refer to Map 3 – Appendix 1). These vary between footpaths, bridleways and byways refer to Map 3 – Appendix 1. Argal Lake is managed for recreation with a 2km circular walk which also joins to a 1km walk up one side of College Reservoir.

CA10 - The B3297 links Redruth with Helston but the remainder of the area is linked by narrow lanes with sharp bends created by following the rectilinear field boundaries and a significant number of tracks leading to isolated smallholdings or single dwellings off the road.

NCA 155 - A network of narrow lanes criss-crosses the area, often along the valley bottoms, and there are few main roads.

3.10 Historic Features

Prehistoric field patterns are still evident across much of the parish. There are 38 listed buildings in the parish (two of which are also scheduled monuments). The Church of St Laudus is Grade II* listed, while the others are Grade II. They are referenced on Maps 2 and 4 - Appendix 4

The historical features which are listed hint at the ancient nature of settlement in the parish, with a listed standing stone (menhir) in the churchyard potentially dating back to the "late Neolithic or early Bronze age" (ie more than 4,000 years ago), and two wayside crosses (in the churchyard and found at Helland) dating back at least 1,000 years. Parts of the church of St Laudus are thought to date back to the 13th century, with evidence of an earlier religious community (pre-Conquest) and ancient burial ground at Helland. Listed farmhouses include parts dating to the late 16th or 17th century, with many of the other listed buildings dating from the 18th century.

The listed buildings and structures emphasise the importance of agriculture to the parish, with 20 listings relating to farmhouses or farm buildings. The pattern of these listed agricultural buildings (at Tremough Barton, Carnsew, Antron, Trenoweth, Lower and Higher Spargo, Goodagrane, Eathorne,

Roscollas, Helland) largely matches the dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets based around farms of medieval origin still recognisable in the parish today.

Almost all of the buildings and structures including in the listings are made primarily, or entirely, of granite (the three exceptions are headstones made of slate). This emphasises the enormous importance of granite and quarrying in the parish over many centuries. There are, however, no listed buildings linked to quarrying, perhaps because of the transitory (and essential destructive) nature of quarrying and the historic volatility of demand for granite – meaning that quarries and their buildings were abandoned – compared to the relative stability of agriculture.

Other historical features which are not listed or designated but are nevertheless of local historic or cultural importance include:

- Prehistoric field patterns
- The New Inn pub – built on an important crossroad, around which the village of Mabe Burnthouse gradually developed
- The shop and post office
- Other significant granite houses in the village and elsewhere in the parish
- Quarrymen's or farm labourers' terraced houses at Tinpit, Trenoweth Lane, the top of Antron Hill, etc – short rows of isolated terraced granite cottages, very distinctive of the parish
- Wesleyan Trenoweth Chapel (1868) and 1960s chapel at Tremough – both now converted but retaining their key features
- Old school at Trenoweth – now residential
- Old rectory at Spargo
- Remnants of iron age rounds (fortified settlements) at Carnsew, Turnermere, Higher Spargo and Tremough
- Abandoned and flooded quarries at Carnsew, Spargo Downs, Higher Spargo, Kessell Down, Trevone, Goodygrane, Pelastine and Tinpit, including, in some cases, remnants of buildings, machinery, dressed and undressed stone etc.
- Ancient footpaths (including the pre-1309 “coffin way” from Mabe church leading to the former mother church at Mylor), footpaths/tracks with remnants of granite paving, granite stiles and sunken lanes.

For more details of the non-listed buildings, see Appendix 5

CA10 - This Landscape Character Area also has traces of later prehistoric unenclosed settlements and field systems and of Iron Age and Roman-period defended farmsteads (rounds), the latter particularly around the margins of the area
Quarrying has also been important

NCA 155 - The central open moorland is surrounded by patterns of irregular ancient fields and very distinct regular 18th- and 19th-century enclosures dominated by Cornish hedges constructed from moorland boulders. Prominent remains of prehistoric field patterns are present

- Historic Cornish hedge boundaries to the fields
- Presence of granite as building material and in its natural state as stones, boulders and outcrops throughout the parish
- Working quarries at Carnsew (Colas - aggregate), Chywoon (Maen Karne - concrete), and Trenoweth (Tim Marsh - stone mason)
- Disused quarries (see 3.10 for list), some now used for other purposes: Kessel Downs (Kernow Wake Park), Goodygrane (BF Adventure), Trevone (small enterprises)
- Field systems
- Ancient trees (eg oak at Helland Mill)
- Tree lines on high ground are distinctive (eg near Bayview Farm).
- Reservoirs - College and Argal
- Kernick industrial estate (a small part of which lies in the north-eastern part of the Parish)
- University campus at Tremough in the north-east of the Parish
- Small wind turbines Carnebo and Goodygrane (BFA)

CA10 - The most distinctive features are the Cornish hedges and hedgerows enclosing the small, irregular field pattern of permanent pasture, the dispersed settlement pattern with mining associations of modest cottages and terraces..... narrow rural lanes and woodland in valleys

3.12 Aesthetic and Sensory

This is a tranquil and quiet rural Parish. Noise intrusion comes from the A394 and from the quarries when they are working.

Wild flowers create an impressive display in Cornish hedges in spring and early summer, and the deciduous trees change with the seasons.

CA10 - an appealing remoteness despite the large number of isolated dwellings and telegraph poles, which seem overly dominant on the open uplands. In the sheltered areas there are some attractive valley farmsteads

For more details of Agriculture and Farmland, see Appendix 6

3.13 Pressures for development

- Pressure for housing developments as a result of Government and Cornwall Council targets leading to loss of agricultural land
- Changes in agricultural practice and the traditional management of farmland
- Increasing field sizes involving the removal of Cornish hedges
- Loss of interconnecting green corridors and semi natural habitat
- Construction of large agricultural buildings
- Accumulation of modern structures including overhead cables
- Suburbanisation of the rural character by cutting roadside verges and planting non-native ornamental species in a rural setting
- Light pollution eroding the dark skies

3.14 Land Management and Development Considerations –

- Locating development on prominent ridge or skylines, particularly skylines with distinctive historic or cultural associations should be avoided.
- The nature of the ridge areas means the prominence of any development will be greater
- Due to the susceptibility of the soil to erosion, agriculture techniques should be encouraged which reduce the rate of water loss and protect against erosion. Maintain and restore Cornish hedges where they are known to slow the flow of surface water and increase the amount of farmland managed under principles established by the Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative
- Retain the strong field pattern of Cornish hedges and the native vegetation they support and reflect the field sizes retaining and enhancing the field pattern.
- The patchworks of semi natural habitats provide a food source for pollinating insects and there is opportunity to increase the area of land covered by semi natural habitats, to increase the diversity and quantity of flowering plants. Increasing the area and range of habitat mosaics where different habitats lie in close proximity will be beneficial.
- Opportunities should be considered to maximise the biodiversity and economic values of small areas of woodland
- Consider the importance of trees to landscape character, and the significant benefit they provide in combatting climate change and the ecosystem services they provide. Retain trees as a priority and where possible look to increase the tree canopy of large species trees.
- Consider the cumulative impact of development, where a development when considered alongside what has already been constructed has a greater combined impact than as an individual building. Where the total development is greater than the sum of its parts.
- Alterations and extensions to dwellings should have appropriate regard to the character of the landscape, in particular to ensure that the scale and design does not dominate or impose on the landscape, and respects the character of the setting
- Ensure any new features match the local vernacular using locally occurring materials
- Prevent any activity that may pose a risk to biodiversity or protected species
- Maintain the distinctive granite landscape features of Cornish hedges, walls, crosses, standing stones and stone stiles
- Consider opportunities to identify and promote Local Geological Sites which add further to an understanding of the history of the area
- Consider how light and sound pollution can be minimised, through appropriate design, in new development.
- Generating new opportunities for recreation in key sites through permissive access agreements linking sites with adjacent settlements, creating permissive access links to further link up rights of way
- Control the spread and introduction of invasive species

3.15 Views

Important visual links between landscape features include:

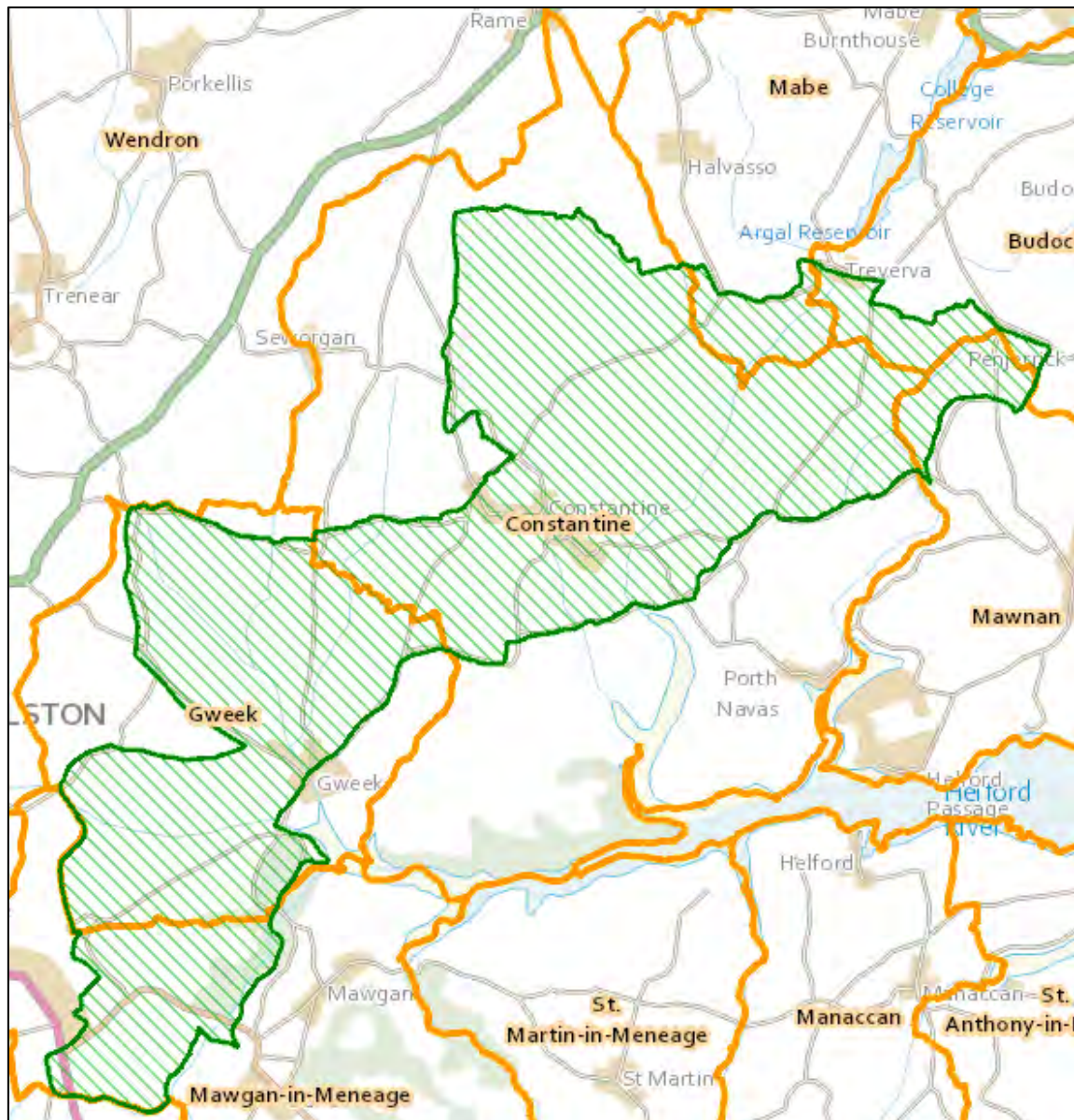
- St Laudus church tower, which is visible from many parts of the Parish and is a notable local landmark
- College and Argal reservoirs, which are key features in the vistas from many south-easterly parts of the Parish
- Prominent outcrops of granite and quarry workings, notable features across the Parish, particularly when looking upwards from lower ground
- The buildings of Kernick industrial estate, Penryn College and the universities' campus, visual features for parts of the Parish.

Being hilly, the Parish has many extensive rural views, including:

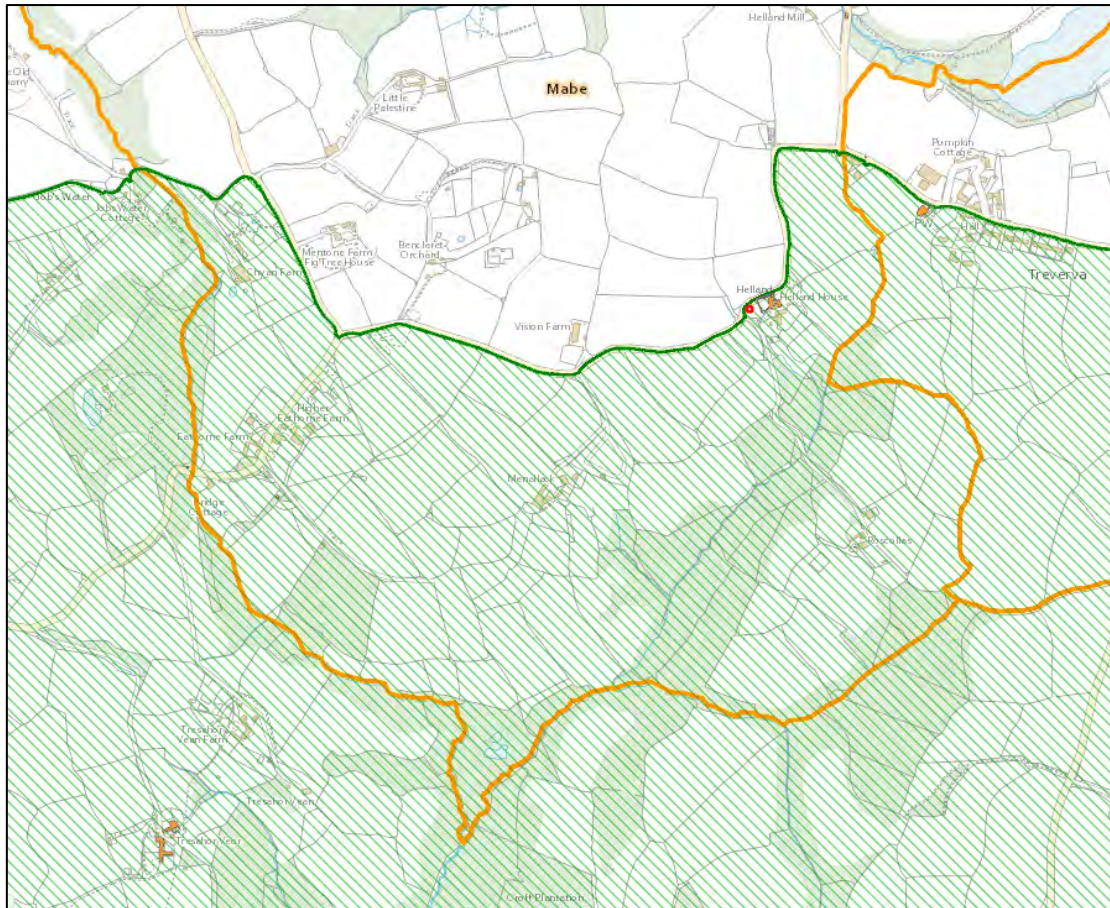
- From Mabe Burnthouse village looking east, views across Penryn and farmland in Budock Parish to the sea at Falmouth Bay
- From Antron Lane, Antron Farm lane and footpaths, south-east across College reservoir with rural views of farmland at Tregonhay Farm in Budock Parish
- From Church Road, south-east across Argal reservoir with rural views towards Argal Farm, Lamanva and Treverva in Budock Parish or north-east including the Roseland peninsula and Clay Country in the distance
- From higher land in the Trenoweth and Spargo areas, south and south-east, sea views of Falmouth Bay and (eg near Bayview Farm) as far as Goonhilly on the Lizard
- From the footpath near Hantertavis, extensive views north-east including the Roseland peninsula and Clay Country
- From the Halvasso road, rural views both westwards and eastwards
- From footpath near Higher Treliever Farm, views of the full extent of Carnsew Quarry, as well as some of Chywoon Quarry
- From Boswin road on the northern boundary of the Parish, views across farmland and Penryn to Falmouth Bay
- From the lane between Treliever Farm and Lower Treliever Farm, views of the Penryn Campus, and also of Penryn, Falmouth and the sea

Section 4 –Area of Great Landscape Value

- 4.1 Gweek to Constantine Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)
The map and text extract below are taken from the 1995 Re-Assessment of Areas of Great Landscape Value and illustrate the overall extent of the Gweek to Constantine AGLV, and then its coverage in the Parish of Mabe.



Gweek to Constantine AGLV whole extent



Gweek to Constantine AGLV in the parish of Mabe

"Much of the landscape is similar to the coastal hinterland of the AONB and is of rich rolling farmland that creates an impression of a mature, well-managed, lush landscape. It is very enclosed with few large scale views. The valleys are well wooded especially around Gweek and east of Constantine with Sessile Oak the dominant species. Lanes and roadways are narrow and twisting, with high hedges enforcing the sense of enclosure. The semi-natural woodlands create specific interest in the area and contrast with the farmland."

This area will form a buffer zone for the AONB and includes the valleys west of Gweek and those east of Constantine.

4.2 Implications of the AGLV in Mabe parish

The AGLV designation is primarily based on the quality and the character of the landscape, and Neighbourhood Planning is an opportunity to ideally enhance this designation.

The Cornwall Local Plan describes land covered by the AGLV designation as: *'areas of high landscape quality with strong and distinctive characteristics which make them particularly sensitive to development. Within AGLVs the primary objective is conservation and enhancement of their landscape quality and individual character.'* Para 2.153

Policy 23 – Natural Environment states:

2. Cornish Landscapes - Development should be of an appropriate scale, mass and design that recognises and respects landscape character of

both designated and un-designated landscapes. Development must take into account and respect the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape asset, considering cumulative impact and the wish to maintain dark skies and tranquillity in areas that are relatively undisturbed, using guidance from the Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment and supported by the descriptions of Areas of Great Landscape Value.

2(b) The Heritage Coast and Areas of Great Landscape Value - Development within the Heritage Coast and / or Areas of Great Landscape Value should maintain the character and distinctive landscape qualities of such areas.

Landscapes designated as an AGLVs are often found adjacent to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) extending this national designation to cover landscapes considered of value to Cornwall.

Since this designation was reassessed in 1995 there has been little development which would undermine the rural landscape qualities for which the designation was originally placed. This Landscape Statement concludes that the overall description is still very relevant today, with the characteristic landscape elements and features strongly present. Although agricultural practices have changed since 1995 the overall pattern of the fields their scale and cultivation remains largely unchanged.

A further assessment of the Cornish AGLVs is to be carried out within the Cornwall Local Plan period as stated in para 2.146:

"All landscapes matter, not just those with national designations which is why attention to distinctiveness and character of the whole of Cornwall is so important. This is reflected by the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. A range of evidence will inform decisions about the impact on landscape including our well documented Areas of Great Landscape Value and through the saved policies from previous Local and Minerals Local Plan. We will undertake reassessment of the descriptions and extent of each Area of Great Landscape Value to inform and produce strong revised statements of these local designations of landscape value."

Section 5 – Relationship between this Landscape Statement and the Mabe Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

5.1 How the Local Landscape Character Assessment links to the Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies

5.1.1 Landscape and the environment were two of the areas most valued and commented on in the consultations carried out as part of the development of the Mabe NDP. Consequently, these were major priorities in the development of the plan and the vision, objectives and policies which form its heart. This can be seen by the number of policies linked to and Landscape, Objective 1, Community and Heritage, and the Transport and Green Infrastructure, objective 3, relative to the vision contained within the Mabe NDP *policy [page 13 NDP Policy]*.

5.1.2 The Vision for Mabe Parish

5.1.3 The Mabe NDP Vision is to develop a plan that sets out how the parish should evolve for the benefit of future generations.

5.1.4 To ensure those Objectives represent the desires and aspirations of the community as a whole.

5.1.5 Upon completion and through the implementation of its policies and supporting information it will safeguard the heritage and environmental aspects that are highly valued and underpin the distinctiveness of the parish.

5.1.6

5.1.7 Objectives

Objective 1-Environment and landscape.

- Maintain and safeguard the rural open space and natural landscape.
- Protect wildlife and act to mitigate climate change through better use of natural resources and the promotion of sustainable living.
- Ensure the distinctiveness of the Parish for future generations.

Objective 2- Community Identity and Heritage

- Protect and enhance the historic business heritage of the parish.
- Ensure future development is matched by appropriate education and recreational facilities.

Objective 3 – Transport& Green Infrastructure.

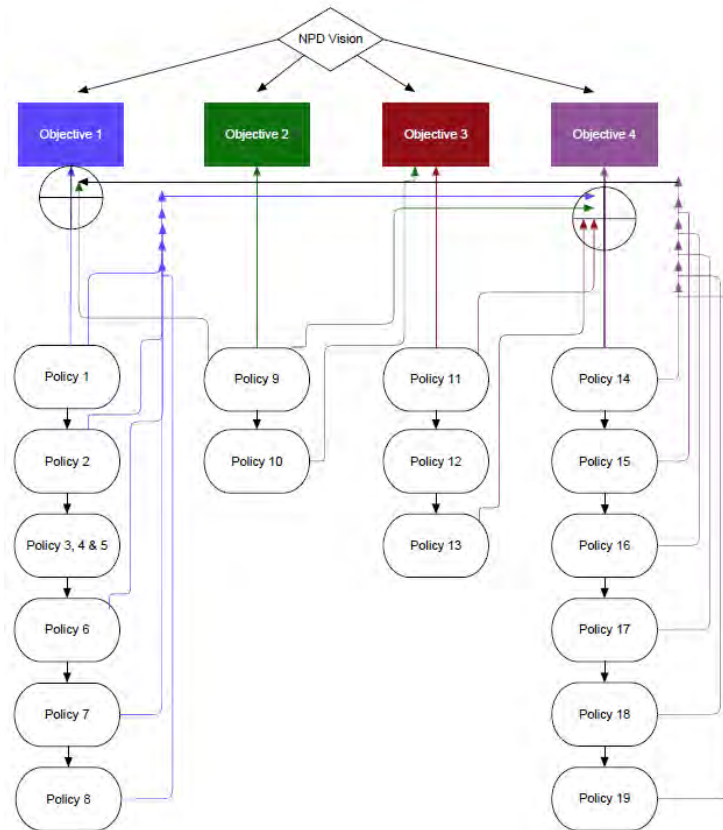
- Support development that ensures better and safer use of roadways and transport needs.

Objective 4 - Housing and Community Facilities

- To provide housing of the right type in the right place, that meets the local need.
- Plan for growth of the Parish based on measurable and clearly defined criteria.
- To Ensure future growth in terms of housing is matched by appropriate infrastructure.

5.1.8 How the Local Landscape Character Assessment can be used to inform planning decisions

Section 6 –The following policies relate to the environment, landscape and locally distinctive character, and will be used to inform planning decisions:



- 6.1 Future proposed development in Mabe NDP area can be assessed against landscape policy. This Landscape Statement provides a desk based description of the landscape for the Mabe NDP highlighting landscape features and attributes which combine to make this landscape unique. When proposals come forward for development, guidance should be considered under 'Land Management and Development Considerations'. This section supports the policy guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework February 2019 and the Cornwall Local Plan 2010- 2030:

National Planning Policy Framework

- a. Paragraph 11 – there is no presumption in favour of development that conflicts with AONB policies
- b. Paragraph 79 – to promote sustainable development in rural areas which enhances its immediate setting and sensitive to local character
- c. Paragraph 122 – achieving appropriate development densities
- d. Paragraph 125 – understanding and identifying an area's defining characteristics
- e. Paragraph 127 – taking into account local character and sense of place
- f. Paragraph 149 and 150 – taking into account climate change including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape
- g. Paragraph 170 – to enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes; recognising character

- and ecosystem services; maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast; providing biodiversity net gain
- h. Paragraph 171 – to recognise the hierarchy of designated sites and maintain a strategic approach to green infrastructure and natural capital
- i. Paragraph 172 – a need for ‘great weight’ to be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB
- j. Paragraph 173 – recognising the special character of the heritage coast
- k. Paragraph 174 – 177 – protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity
- l. Paragraph 189 – 202 – protection and enhancement of the historic environment

Cornwall Local Plan

- a. Policy 2 - Spatial Strategy – considering cultural, physical and aesthetic understanding of location; impact on biodiversity, landscape character, and historical and recreational value; the value and sensitivity and importance of landscape; protecting and conserving the natural and historic landscape
- b. Policy 7 - Housing in the Countryside – regarding scale mass and character of location
- c. Policy 9 - Rural Exception Sites – where the built form should be ‘well related’ to the physical form of the settlement and appropriate in scale character and appearance
- d. Policy 23 - development which sustains local distinctiveness and character; respects the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape asset; protection of the undeveloped coast; ‘great weight’ given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB; maintaining the character of Heritage Coast and Areas of Great Landscape Value; conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity; avoidance, mitigation and compensation for development impact.

- 6.2 Judging Landscape Capacity – A Development Management Toolkit⁴ is Cornwall Council guidance which can be used to assess the impact of a specific development on a specific parcel of land, is available in Appendix 3. This development management toolkit uses the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment as the evidence base, and the Mabe Landscape Statement adds a further layer of local detail to this county wide assessment. The sensitivity of the landscape and its capacity to accommodate future development, can be objectively assessed using this ‘Toolkit’.

⁴ adopted by Cornwall Council in 2014

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Mapping

Appendix 2 – Glossary

Appendix 3 – Judging Landscape Capacity – A Development Management Toolkit

Appendix 4 – Listed Buildings

Appendix 5 – Non designated Heritage Assets

Appendix 6 – Agricultural & farmland

Appendix 1 – Mapping

Map 1 – Landscape Character Areas

Map 2 – Constraints 1

Map 3 – Constraints 2

Map 4 – Constraints 3

Map 5 – ERCCIS Wildlife Resource

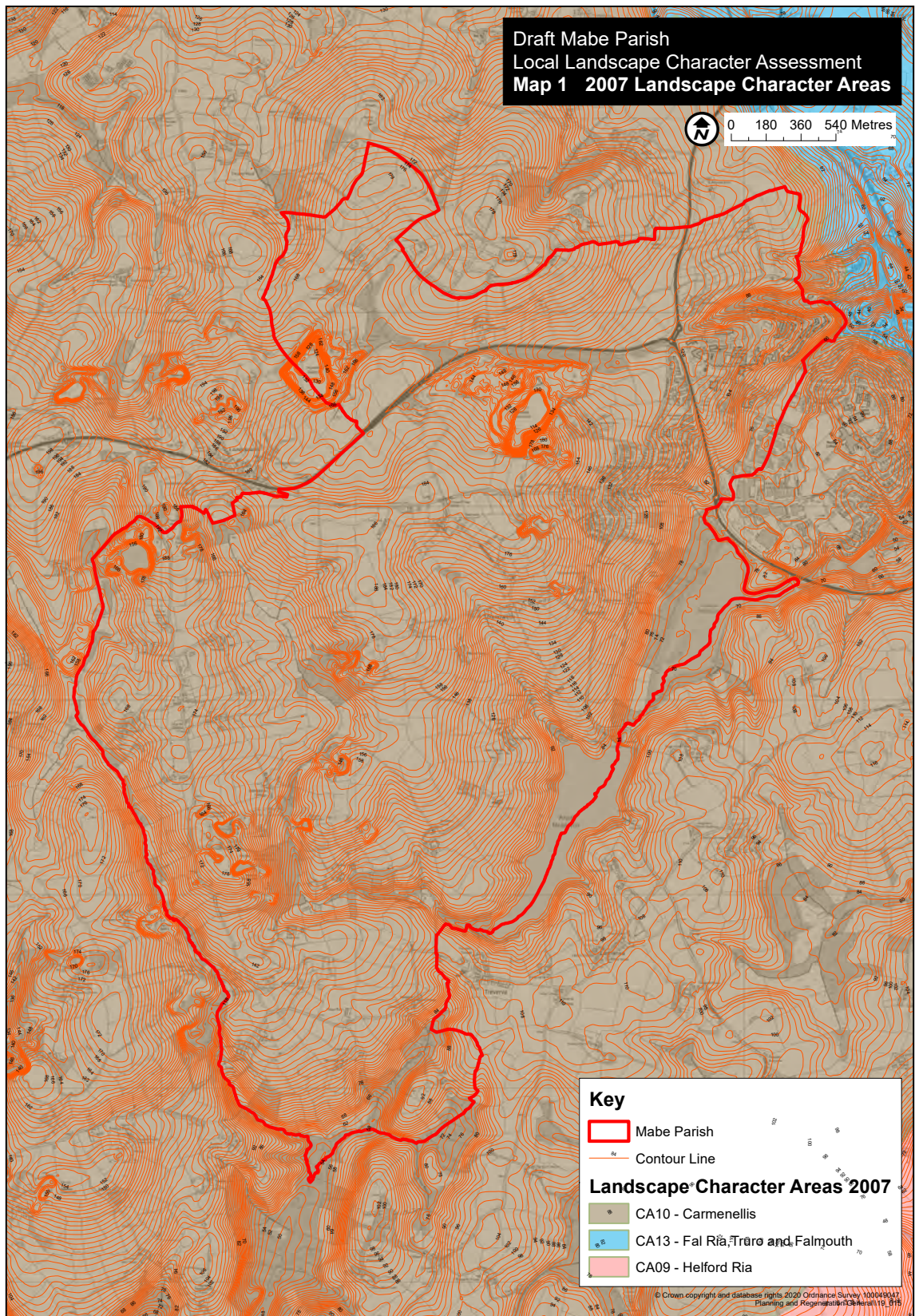
Map 6 – ERCCIS Land cover Habitat Interpretation

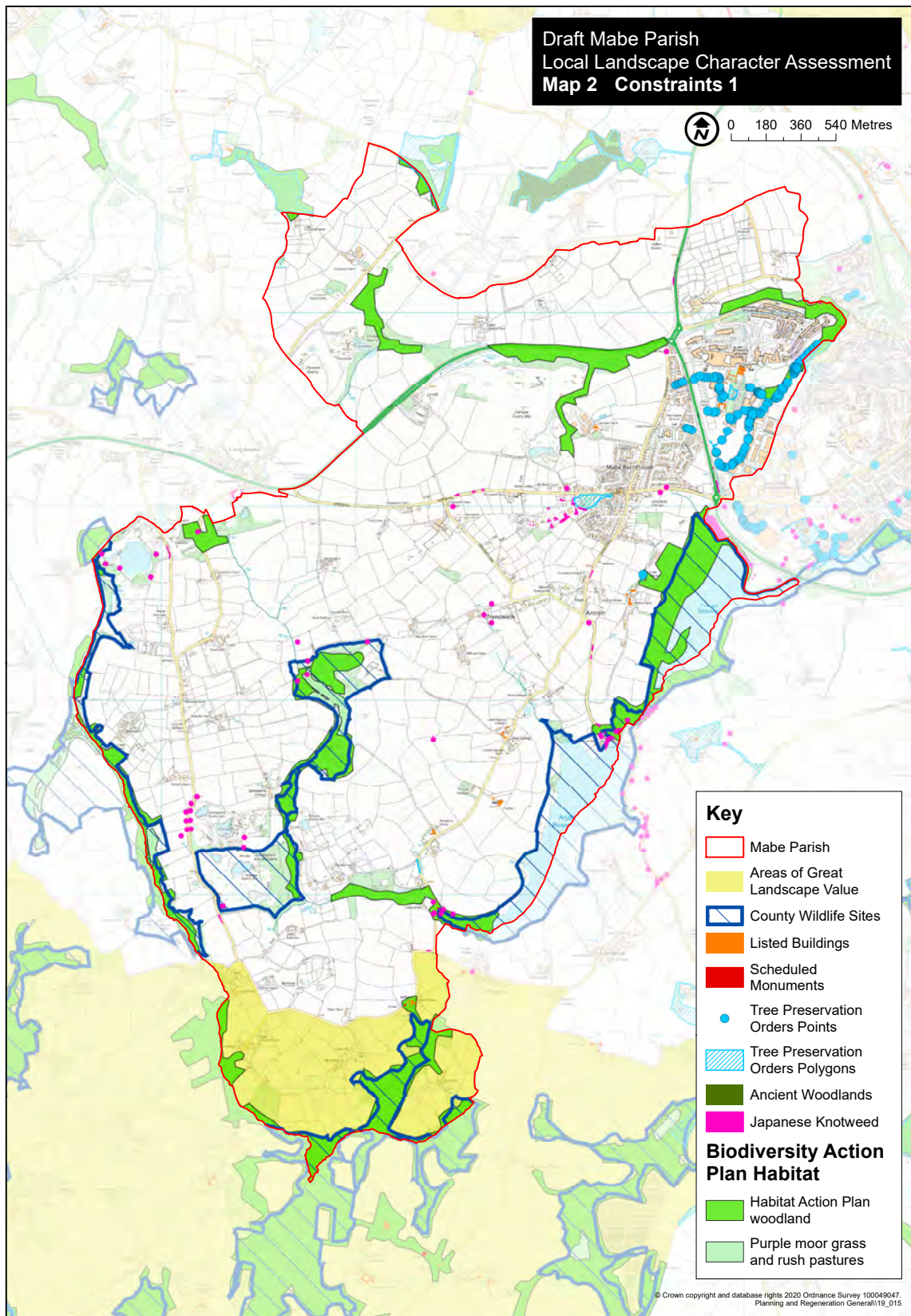
Map 7 – ERCCIS Designations and Features of Conservation Interest

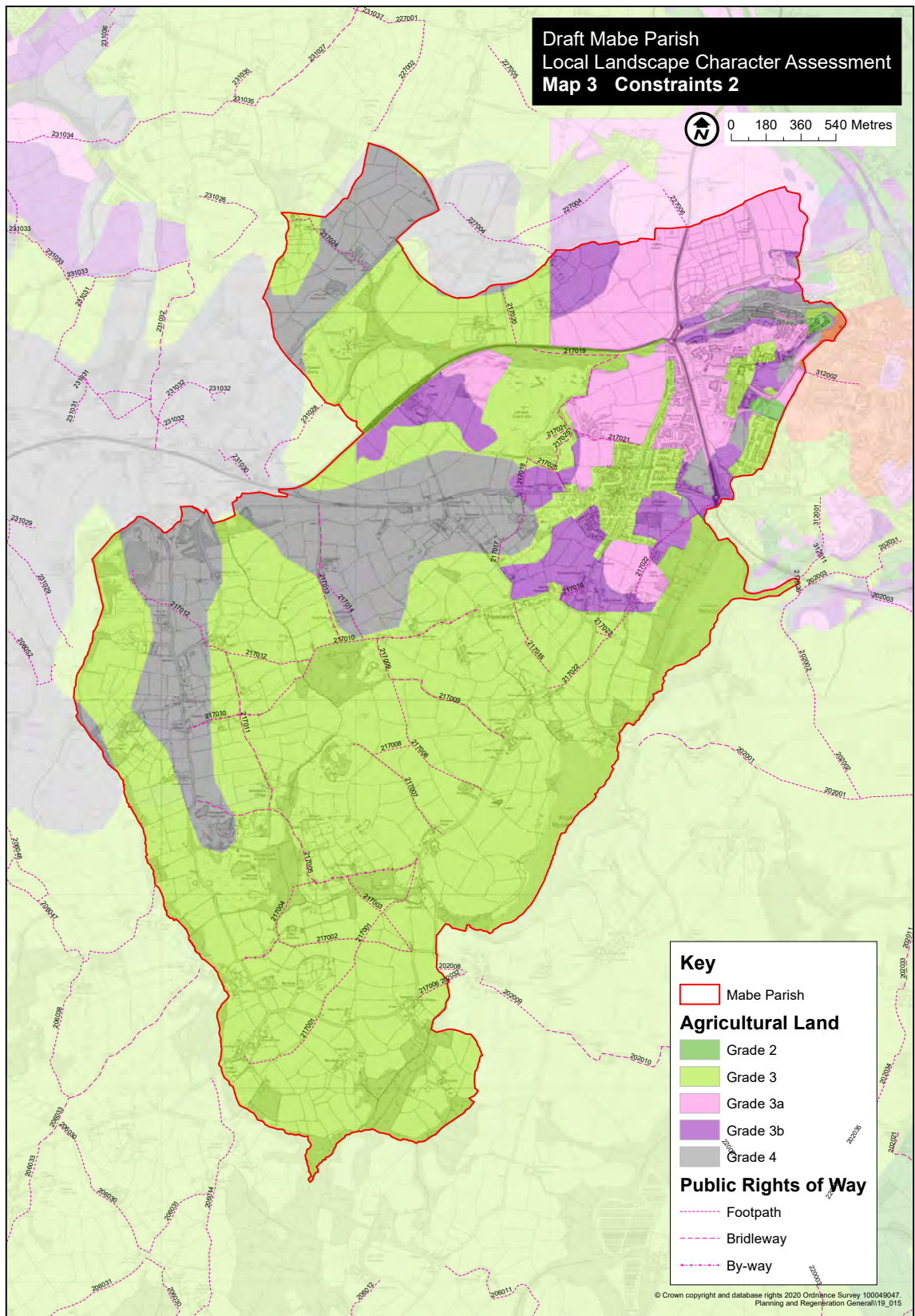
Map 8 – ERCCIS Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat

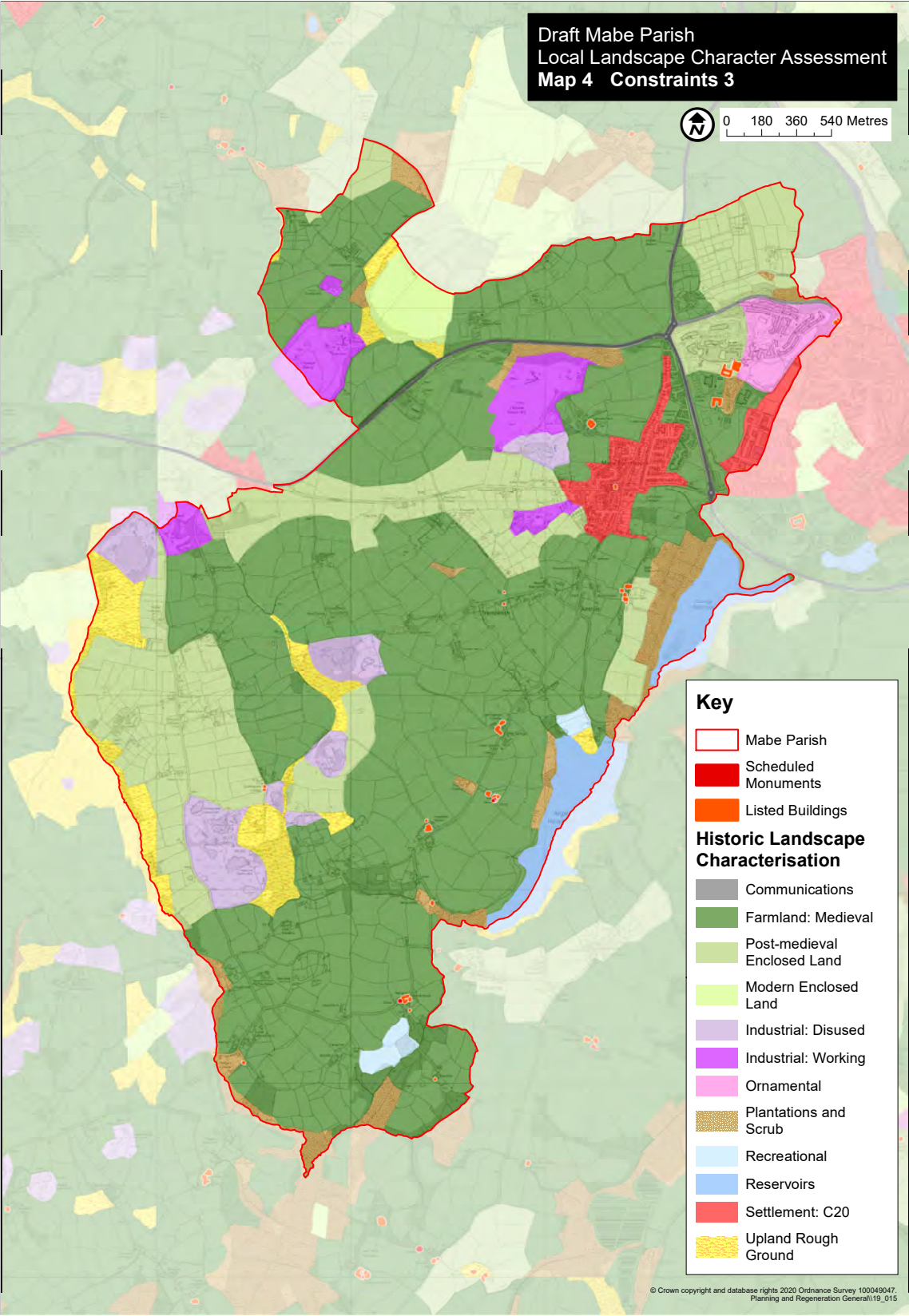
Map 9 – Cornish hedges

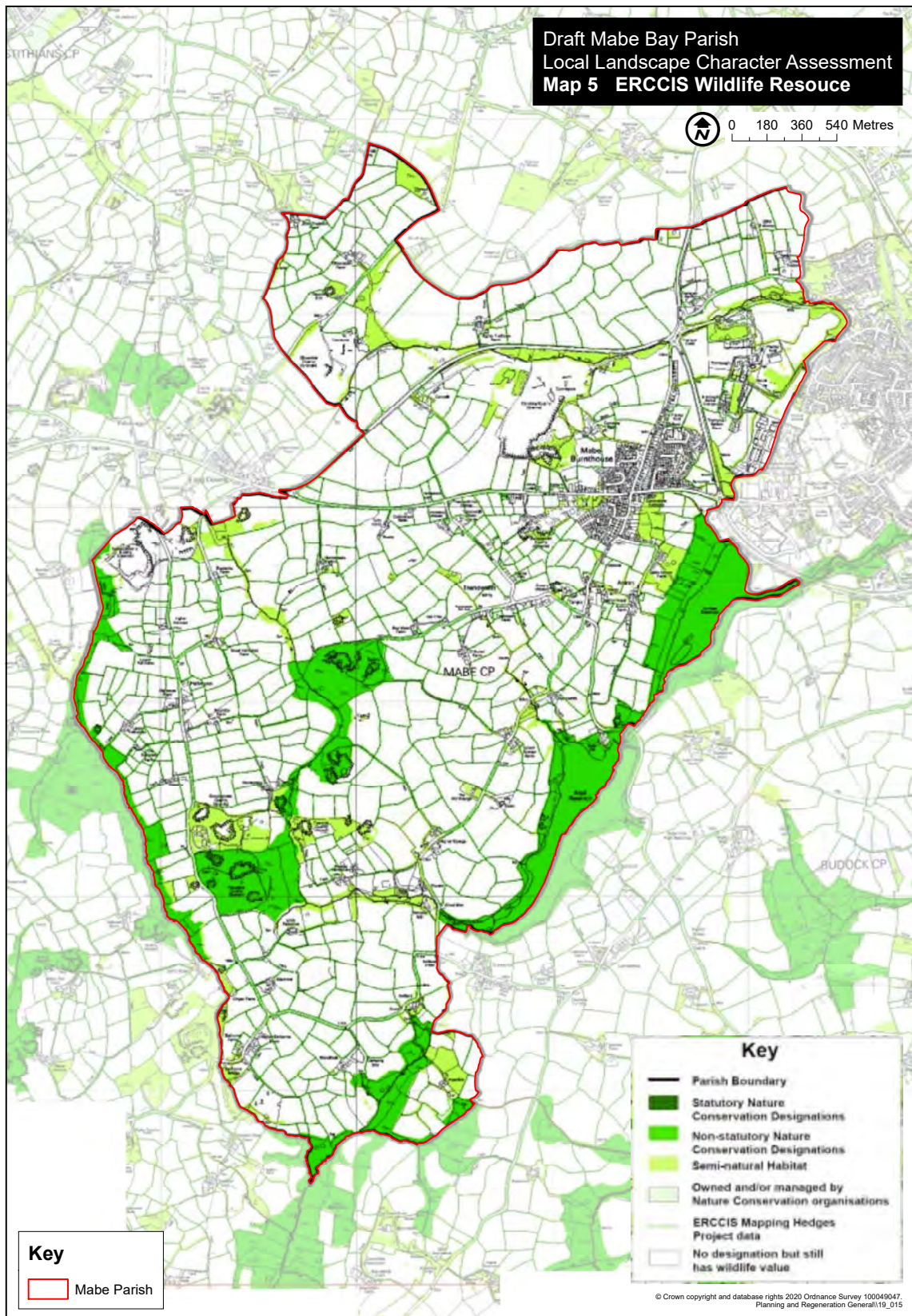
Map 10 – Historic mapping, 1875-1901

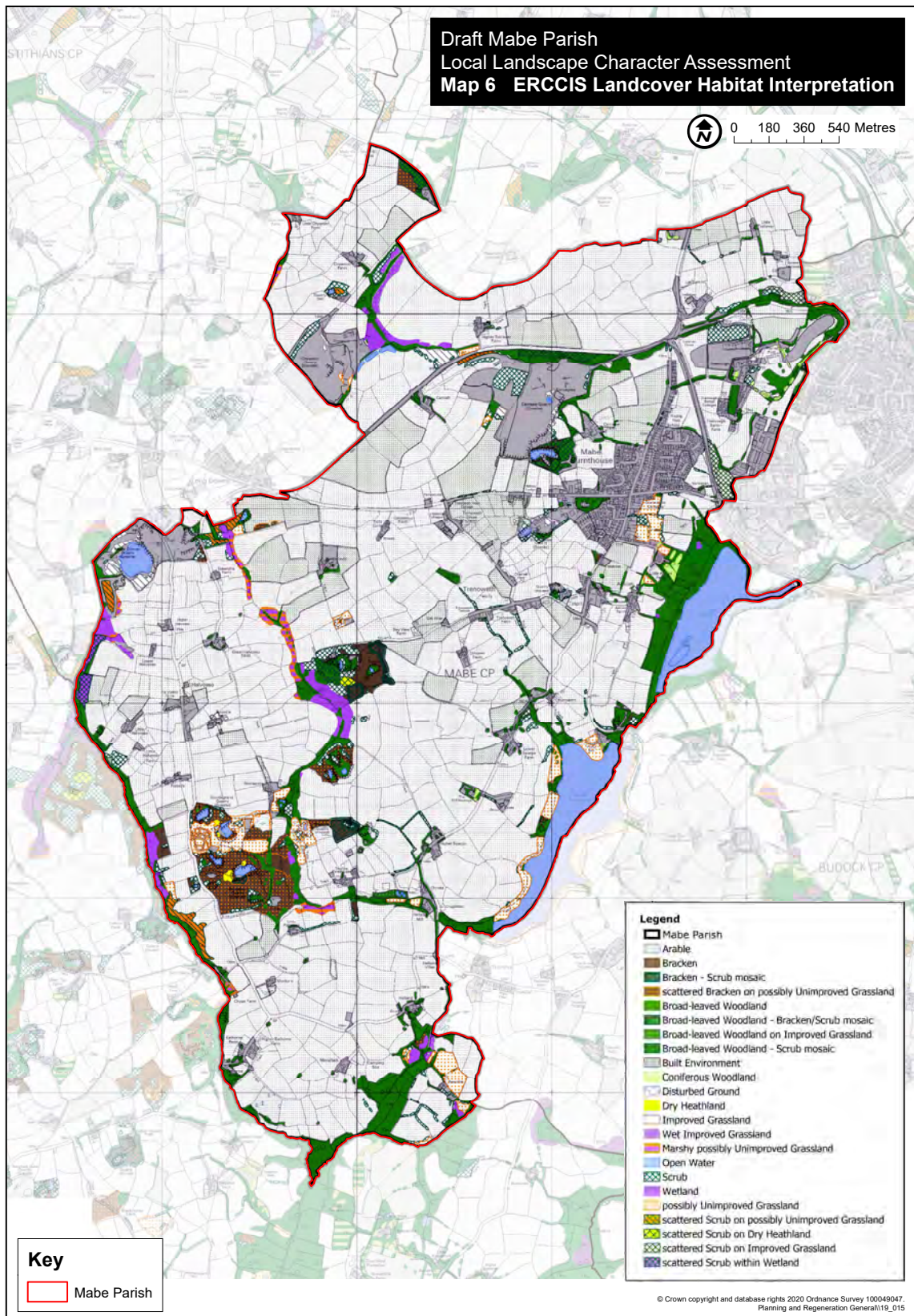


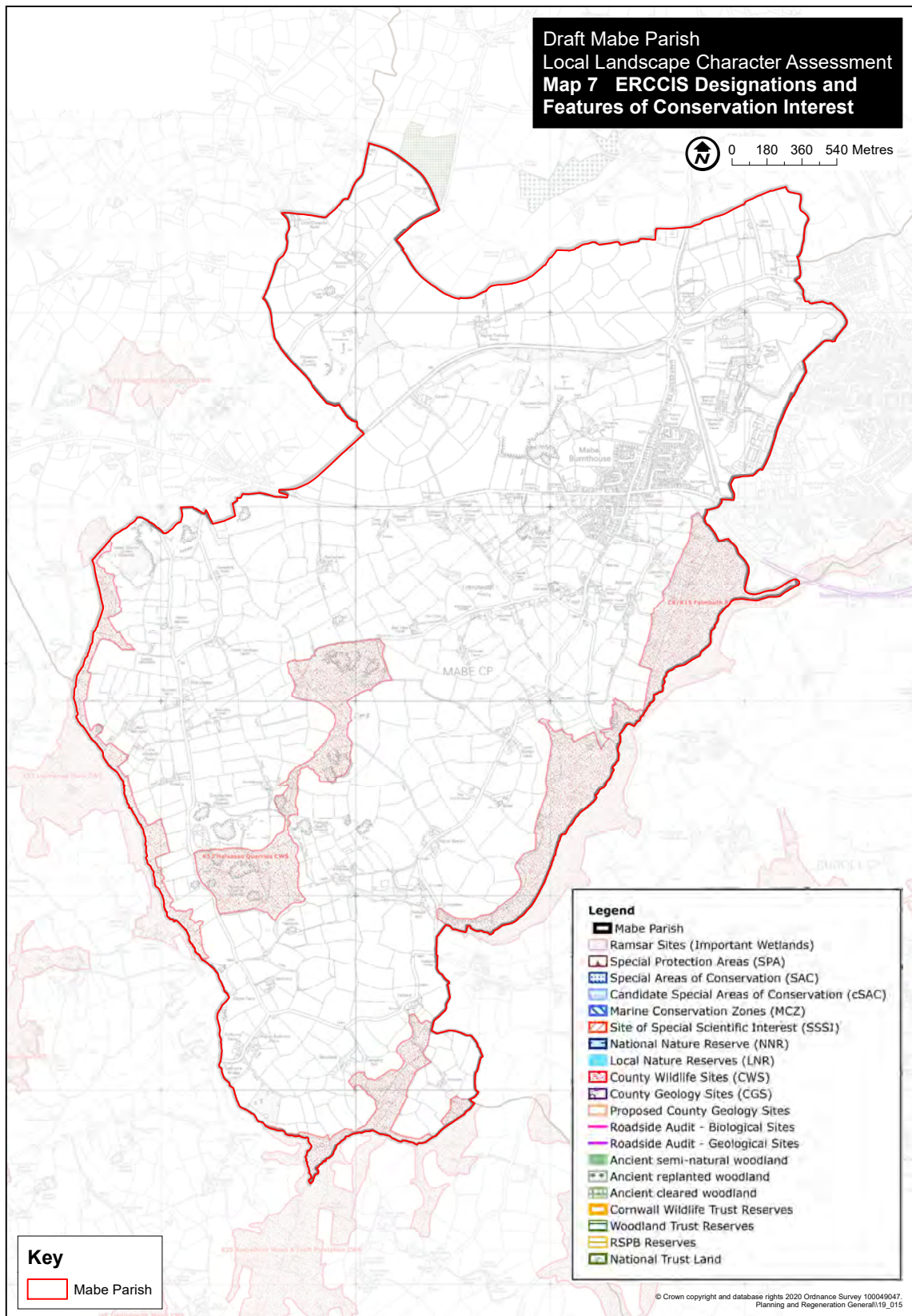


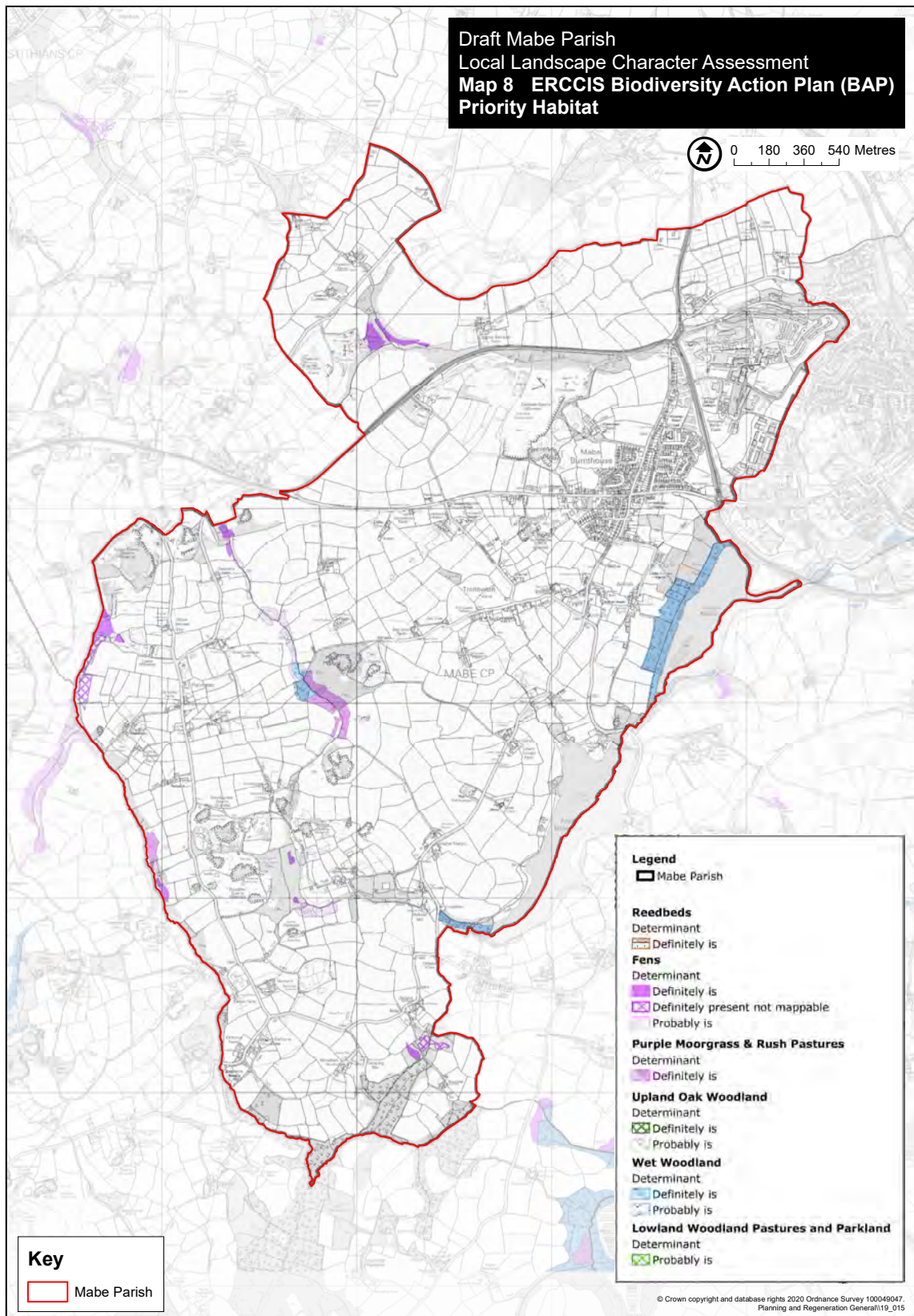


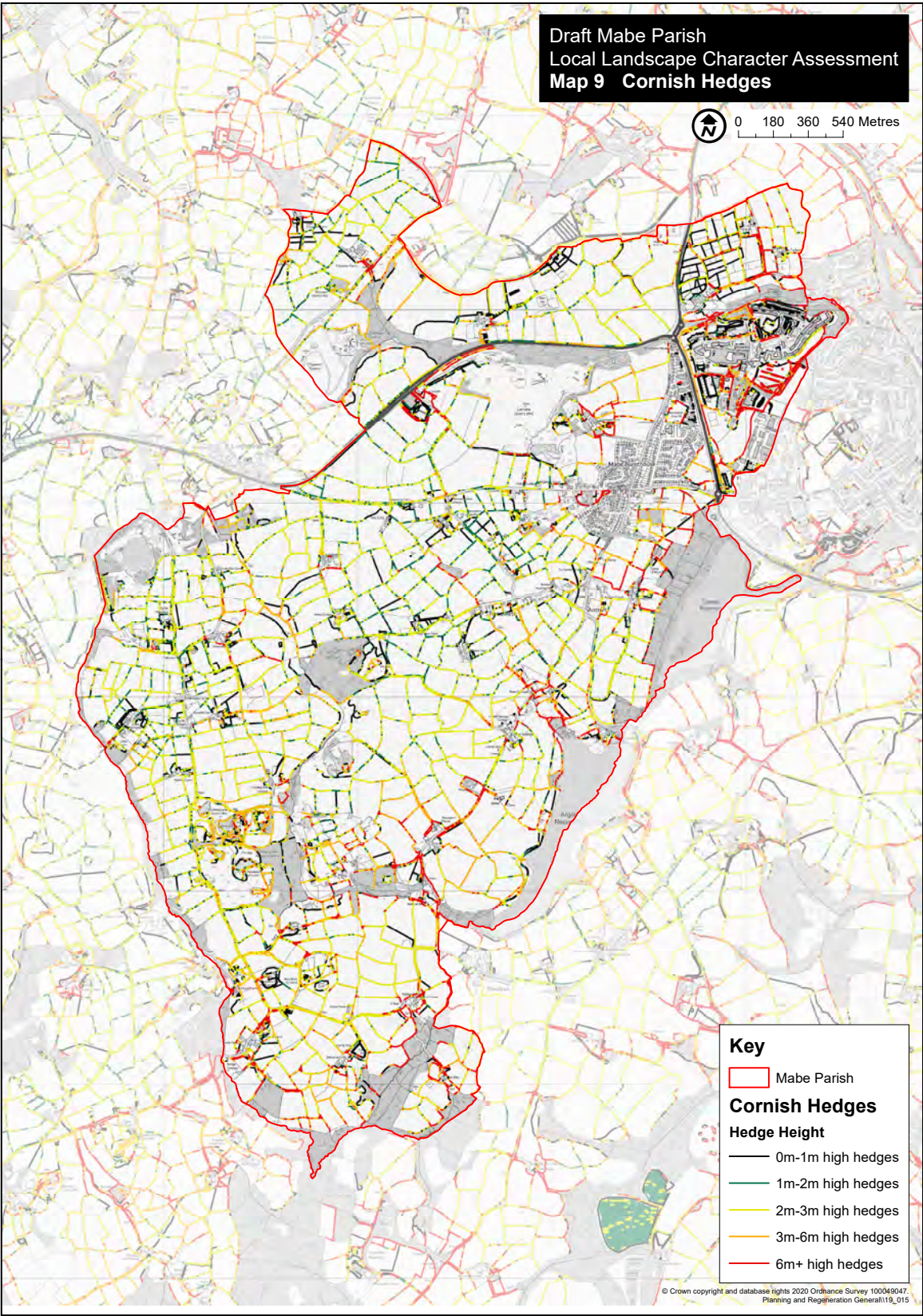












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Appendix 2 – Glossary

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| AONB | Area of Outstanding Beauty (includes Cornwall AONB; Tamar AONB and Isles of Scilly AONB) The designation gives a formal recognition to an area's landscape importance with the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area. |
| Ancient Woodland | Land continuously wooded since AD 1600. It is an extremely valuable ecological resource, usually with a high diversity of flora and fauna |
| Assessment | Term to describe all the various ways of looking at, analysing, evaluating and describing the landscape |
| Biodiversity | The variety of life including all the different habitats and species in the world. Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) |
| Conservation | The protection and careful management of natural and built resources and the environment |
| Conservation Area | An area identified and designated as being of special architectural or historic interest, where the preservation and enhancement of its character and appearance is a priority. Within a Conservation Area the local authority has extra controls over demolition, minor developments and works to trees. |
| Capacity (landscape) | The ability of a landscape to accommodate different amounts of change or development of the specific type |
| Character | A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, features and qualities in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse |
| Characteristics/elements | Features and qualities which make a particular contribution to distinctive character |
| Characterisation | The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character |
| Condition | The degree to which a landscape is soundly managed, is fit for purpose or achieves optimum biodiversity |
| Cornish Hedge | Boundary in Cornwall. In the context of this study the term would normally relate to stone faced bank, with or without hedging plants on the top |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| CWS | County Wildlife Site The most significant areas of semi-natural habitat in Cornwall outside statutory protected sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Areas of Conservation. There are currently 498 County Wildlife Sites in Cornwall covering nearly 33,000 hectares. This is nearly 10% of the county's land area and is under both public and private ownership. |
| Development | The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land (Town and Country Planning Act, 1990). |
| Element | Individual component parts of the landscape such as field boundaries, woodlands, patches of similar vegetation, outbuildings, structures and rock outcrops |
| ELC | European Landscape Convention Highlights the importance and need for public involvement in the development of landscapes. It encourages a joined up approach through policy and planning in all areas of land-use, development and management, including the recognition of landscape in law. The Convention promotes landscape protection, management and planning, and European co-operation on landscape issues. |
| Feature | Prominent eye catching elements e.g. wooded hill top or chapel |
| Field Boundary | The defined edge of a field whether fence, hedge, bank, ditch or wall |
| Field Size | Within this document Large: 6 Hectares or more; Medium: approximately 3-5 Hectares; Small: less than 3 Hectares |
| Geology | The study of the origin, structure, composition and history of the Earth together with the processes that have led to its present state |
| Ground Type | Expression of the soil forming environment and its influence in determining the surface pattern of vegetation and land use |
| Hedge | A boundary of shrubs or low trees, living or dead, or of turf or stone. Though strictly a row of bushes forming a hedge, hedgerow has been taken to mean the same as a hedge |
| Hedge bank | Earth bank or mound relating to a hedge |
| Heritage Coast | A coastal designation without statutory weight designed to protect the landscape and provide for managed recreation |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| GI | Green Infrastructure Strategic networks of accessible, multifunctional sites (including parks, woodland, informal open spaces, nature reserves and historic sites) as well as linkages (such as river corridors and floodplains, wildlife corridors and greenways). These contribute to peoples well-being, and together comprise a coherent managed resource responsive to evolving conditions. |
| HLC | Historic Landscape Characterisation a mosaic of blocks of land which are assigned, using a number of systematic sources (mainly maps), to clearly distinguishable historic landscape character types |
| Land Cover | Combinations of natural and man-made elements including vegetation that cover the land surface |
| Landscape | The inherent character and the visual appearance of the land including its shape, form and colour derived from geology, landform, soils, ecology, archaeology, landscape history, land use, settlement character and pattern and cultural associations |
| LCA | Landscape Character Areas Constructed by amalgamating Landscape Description Units with shared common perceptual and other characteristics, and represent the next scale down from the large JCAs |
| Landform | Combinations of slope and elevation, the producer shape and form of the land |
| Landscape Character | Landscape is about the relationship between people and the land, a combination of distinctive and valued natural and cultural elements, which extend to seascapes and the built environment |
| Landscape Character Assessment | A tool for identifying the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpointing what makes it different from its neighbouring areas. In the context of the European Landscape Convention it is an essential tool for identifying and understanding what makes landscapes important |
| Public open space | Space within or on the edge of a settlement accessible to the public such as parks, gardens, playing fields and play areas for the purposes of formal and informal recreation or general amenity. |
| SAC | Special Area of Conservation Areas which have been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive. They provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity. |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Semi-natural vegetation | Any type of vegetation that has been influenced by human activities, either directly or indirectly. The term is usually applied to areas which are reverting to nature due to lack of management |
| Sensitivity (of Landscape) | The inherent sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change that may occur. In this project, it is divided into cultural, ecological and visual sensitivity |
| Sense Of Place | The unique experience that arises as a result of being in or walking through a particular locality, generally as a response to the specific characteristics and quality of the area. |
| Sensory | That which is received through the senses ie sight, hearing, smell, touch |
| Settlement | All dwellings/habitations, whether single or clustered in towns and villages |
| Settlement Pattern | The predominant pattern of settlement in an area |
| SM | Scheduled Monument nationally important sites and monuments given legal protection by being placed on a list, or 'schedule'. English Heritage takes the lead in identifying sites in England. |
| SSSI | Sites of Special Scientific Interest the county's very best wildlife and geological sites, and include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats |
| SPA | Special Protection Area classified sites strictly protected in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive, for rare and vulnerable birds, and for regularly occurring migratory species. |
| Subjective | Method of assessment in which personal views and reaction are used in the characterisation process |
| Topography | Term used to describe the features of the Earth's surface |
| Vernacular | Built in the local style, from local materials |
| WHS | World Heritage Site Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site covers select mining landscapes across Cornwall and west Devon inscribed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to identify, protect |

and conserve natural and cultural Sites deemed of Outstanding Universal Value

Wildland Land with little or no management for agriculture or for settlement, often remote.

Appendix 3 - Judging Landscape Capacity

A Development Management Toolkit 2014

Appendix 3



Judging Landscape Capacity

A Development Management Toolkit

Endorsed by Environment Heritage and Planning Portfolio Advisory Committee

16th October 2014

This document will form part of a Landscape Supplementary Planning Document as part of the emerging Cornwall Local Plan.

Introduction

Landscape is about the relationship between people and place, and is the setting for our lives. The Cornish landscape is unique, stunning, diverse, and a major economic asset which provides

- economic value - often becoming a central factor in attracting business and tourism,
- social and community value as an important part of people's lives, contributing to our sense of identity and well-being, and bringing enjoyment and inspiration
- environmental value as a home for wildlife and a cultural record of society's use of the land.

It is crucial that we understand what makes up the character of the landscape so when we consider how it might change, that change is for the better. Through landscape character assessment we can gain an understanding of what elements of the character are important and have value to help in the decision making process.

The 2004 Structure Plan under Policy 2 – Character Areas, Design & Environmental Protection recognised the need to protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of the natural and built environment through 26 Areas of Great Landscape Value. Whilst the emerging Local Plan does not contain a policy for AGLV it does under Policy 2 look to

‘Identify the value and sensitivity of all landscapes, understanding what is important to the character to allow them to be protected, enhanced and conserved’

This Toolkit (based upon a document written by Colette Holden Cornwall AONB Manager, revised in line with GLVIA3, 2013) provides a framework for making decisions relating to specific development proposals, to identify the landscape’s sensitivity to the proposed change, the value of the landscape within which the development is proposed, and whether the landscape has the capacity to accept the change without adverse impact.

The Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment - 2007

Cornwall’s Landscape Character Assessment is a tool that can help in the decision making process. It divides the landscape of Cornwall up into 40 areas with commonality (Landscape Character Areas or LCA). Each of these 40 individual LCAs has a separate description which outlines the key characteristics which make that landscape unique.

This information can help guide planners and developers to achieve high quality development which conserves and enhances local distinctiveness, is in the right place, and respects its surroundings and locale. Landscape Character Assessment cannot provide a definitive answer but it can help to

- assess land availability for a range of uses, including new development
- inform the siting and design of particular types of development such as housing, minerals, telecommunications and renewable energy
- provide information for Environmental Assessments of plans, policies and individual development proposals.

The 40 Character Areas in the 2007 Assessment do not describe the sensitivity, or the value of the landscape. Character and visual sensitivity will vary across a LCA, and will depend upon the development which is proposed. This Toolkit looks at the development specific effects on landscape character and views, and provides a framework for a judgement to be made as to the capacity of the landscape to accept the change created by the proposed development.

The mapping information for the 40 LCAs is available on the Landscape pages of the Council's web site at [Cornwall Council interactive mapping](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/cornwall_landscape) (www.cornwall.gov.uk/cornwall_landscape)

To support the 2007 Assessment the [Landscape Character Assessment Best Practice Guidance 2011](#) can also be downloaded from the Landscape pages of the Council's web site (www.cornwall.gov.uk/cornwall_landscape)

Using Landscape Character Assessment in Development Management

Policy context for character assessment

Landscape characterisation creates an evidence base to be used as a tool for considering development proposals, which is now recognised and supported at the national and local policy level:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

This National document states as one of its 12 Core Principles that planning should

'take account of the different roles and character of different areas.....recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'

'Permission should be refused for development of poor design, that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area' paragraph 64

'Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes' paragraph 109

'Maintain the character of the undeveloped coast, protecting and enhancing its distinctive landscapes' paragraph 114

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Designated under the National Parks Act this designation seeks to protect and enhance the landscape whilst recognising the needs of the local community and economy. Government has confirmed that AONBs are equivalent to national parks in terms of their landscape quality, scenic beauty and their planning status.

Emerging Cornwall Local Plan

Policy 2

Maintain the special character of Cornwall, recognising all landscapes are important, in order to;

- a. Promote and enhance the special qualities that make up the diverse and locally distinctive landscapes of Cornwall;
- b. Identify the value and sensitivity of all landscapes, understanding what is important to the character to allow them to be protected, enhanced and conserved;
- c. Create resilient landscapes and sensitively accommodate investment and growth within Cornwall's unique landscape qualities, ensuring people continue to be drawn to Cornwall to visit and for a thriving healthy population to live and work;
- d. Protect the natural beauty of the AONB and undeveloped coast.

(as presented to Environment & Planning Portfolio Advisory Committee, October 2013)

Policy 23 – Natural Environment

Development proposals will need to sustain Cornwall's local distinctiveness and character and protect and enhance Cornwall's natural environment and assets according to their international, national and local significance through the following measures:

- Appropriate scale, mass and design which recognise and respect the distinctive and diverse, landscape character and coastline as being vital to the Cornwall's economy, whilst having regard for the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape asset, the potential for cumulative impact and the wish to maintain dark skies and tranquillity in areas that are relatively undisturbed as set out in the Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment and supported by the descriptions of the Areas Of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)
- Ensuring any proposals within the AONB or affecting its setting, conserves and enhances the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB, is appropriately located to address the AONB's sensitivity and capacity and delivers the objectives of the Cornwall and Tamar Valley AONB Management Plans

When to use Landscape Character Assessment in Development Management

The aim of this toolkit is to increase the capacity of development management officers to use the Landscape Character Assessment evidence base to inform decision making.

It is recognised that landscape will be one of many considerations in the determination of a planning application, and that the decision will be guided by national planning guidance and the Local Planning Authority's emerging policies. This toolkit provides a means to ensure that landscape character is addressed in an informed, and consistent manner in the determination of planning applications.

How is change accommodated?

The landscape character assessment information is intended to be used to guide change and support decision making. If through this process it is shown that a landscape has a low

capacity to accommodate a certain kind of development, the landscape character information enables informed decisions to be made on changes in design at the pre-application stage or for conditions to be set at the recommendation stage.

Good design should be about sustainability and being in tune with the landscape. The landscape character information can also inform developers at the design stage in the process so that the design of developments can be improved to be more in harmony with the landscapes within which they sit.

Overview of the Toolkit methodology

| Step 1 | | Step 2 | | Step 3 |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Character | + | Character | = | Character |
| Significance | | Vulnerability | | Sensitivity to Change |
| Assessing the character of the landscape without the proposed development | | How would the landscape characteristics change if the development were to take place | | Sensitivity of the character to the proposed development |

| Step 3 | | Step 4 | | Step 5 |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Character | + | Visibility | = | Landscape Sensitivity |
| Sensitivity to Change | | Assessing the visual impact of the development | | Sensitivity of the landscape to the proposed development |
| Sensitivity of the character to the proposed development | | | | |

| Step 5 | | Step 6 | | Step 7 |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Landscape Sensitivity | + | Value | = | Landscape Capacity |
| Sensitivity of the | | The human response to the | | The degree to which the |

landscape to the
proposed development

landscape, the quality and
condition

landscape can accept
the proposed

development without
adverse effects

Step 8

Mitigation

Ways to prevent, reduce, or offset the identified significant adverse landscape and visual effects of the development.

Consider mitigation throughout the design process, when landscape and visual effects are identified, and also for addressing effects which are identified as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |

STEP 1 Character Significance - Assess the character of the landscape without the proposed development

Desk study and site visit

Through a site visit and reference to the relevant [Landscape Character Area \(LCA\)](#)⁵ description describe the contribution which the **undeveloped site** makes to character of the area. You may need to refer to more than one LCA where the site lies close to the boundary.

Is the site representative of the character of the area, and what parts of the LCA are relevant to the site referring to the following headings from the LCA description?

1. 'Key Characteristics'
2. Topography and drainage – the land form and presence of water
3. Biodiversity – covering ecology and habitats
4. Land use / land cover – how is the land used
5. Field and woodland pattern – including contribution of individual trees
6. Transport pattern – including roads and PROW
7. Historic features – including cultural features
8. Aesthetic and sensory experience of the site and the wider landscape

Note the main points of character

⁵ 2007 Landscape Character Assessment - Zoom in to locate the site, once you have your site click on the map, and use the hyperlink at the bottom of the page to bring up the relevant LCA description.



‘Character Significance’ criteria

Which of the following criteria best describes the existing character of the site and its setting?

No positive significance – The site and its setting do not positively contribute to the existing character or are having a current negative impact. Consider the potential through good design for the development to enhance the character and positively contribute to the local sense of place. (refer to Step 8).

Low character significance - The site and its setting make small contribution to the existing character by positively reflecting a small part of the relevant Landscape Character Area description(s).

Moderate character significance - The site and its setting makes a reasonable contribution to the existing character which is reflected in a number of elements and features present, or in one or more elements and features which contribute very strongly to the character.

High character significance -The site in its setting makes a good contribution to the existing character and many of the attributes fit closely to the Landscape Character Area description, where one or more features are key to character.

Record your reason for the criteria selected

Further reference

- Locate Landscape Character Area (LCA) information through [Cornwall Council interactive mapping](#) by zooming in to locate the site, clicking on the map, and using the hyperlink at the bottom of the page to bring up the relevant LCA description.
- For development applications for on shore wind and solar PV - [An Assessment of the Landscape Sensitivity to On Shore Wind Energy & Large Scale Photovoltaic Development In Cornwall \(2011 Land Use Consultants\)](#)

- [Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment Best Practice Guidance](#)
- [Historic Landscape Character](#)
- [English Heritage guidance on landscape characterisation](#)
- Ecological designations – Natural England, National Biodiversity Network, Cornwall Council's intranet mapping www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk
www.ercis.co.uk
- Appendix 1 – Desk Survey
- Appendix 2 – Site visit - getting an overview

STEP 2 Character Vulnerability - Assess the degree of change

How would the character change if the development were to take place?

How will the proposed development affect both the individual elements which combine to create the existing character and the overall landscape character ?. What elements will be changed, and how ? (eg. feature trees removed; field sizes increased by hedge removal)

Is the change positive or negative with respect to character?

Table 1 in Appendix 2 provides questions to prompt matters to be considered for each of the attributes of character.

Note how the character is changed by the development

'Character Vulnerability' criteria

Which of the following criteria best describes how the existing character will be altered by the proposed development?

No adverse change – the effects of the proposed development on the existing character will be neutral or beneficial. There is the opportunity through the pre application development of the design proposals to positively enhance the existing character (refer to Step 8).

Low character vulnerability - adverse effects on the character of the site and/or its setting will be small in magnitude ie. size, scale, limited duration and reversible, where there may be opportunities for positive enhancement works It is likely that through mitigation of construction and operational management practices that adverse effects on character can be reduced (refer to Step 8).

Moderate character vulnerability – the development will create adverse effects on one or more elements and features which contribute very strongly to the character of the site and its setting. Reduction of the effects on character through mitigation will be limited.

High character vulnerability – the character will be adversely affected across the whole or large parts of the site and/ or its setting, and it will not be possible to reduce the significant landscape effects through mitigation.

Record your reason for the criteria selected

Further reference

- LCA information through [Cornwall Council interactive mapping](#).
- [Historic Landscape Character](#)
- Step 8 – Mitigation
- Appendix 2 – Site Visit : Getting an overview

STEP 3 Character Sensitivity To Change - How sensitive the existing character is to the proposed change

The results of the previous 'Character Significance' and 'Character Vulnerability' assessments are combined in the matrix below to give a level of Character Sensitivity to the proposed development.

| | | Step 2 – Character Vulnerability | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|----------|------|
| Step 1 – Character Significance | | Low | Moderate | High |
| | Low | L | LM | M |
| | Moderate | LM | M | MH |
| | High | M | MH | H |

'Character Sensitivity' criteria

Which of the following criteria best describes how sensitive the existing character will be, to the types of change which will be created by the development?

Low character sensitivity - The site makes little contribution to the character of the area and/or is not significantly vulnerable to the proposed change. Restoration and or enhancement of the landscape through the development is likely to be possible. There is opportunity through pre application discussions to positively enhance the existing character. Where enhancement has not been considered in the case of a full application, and opportunities have been missed, amendments to the scheme should be requested. (refer to Step 8).

Low Moderate character sensitivity The character of the landscape is robust to the proposed change, or the site makes a small contribution to the character which is vulnerable to change,. There is the potential for mitigation measures to reduce adverse effects on the character either through pre-application discussions or as amendments to a full planning submission (refer to Step 8).

Moderate character sensitivity - The site makes a good contribution to character which will suffer an extent of adverse change due to the development proposed. The site has the potential for enhancement and/ or conservation of character. There is opportunity through pre application development of the design proposals to introduce mitigation measures to reduce adverse effects upon the character (refer to Step 8).

Moderate High character sensitivity - The site contributes much to the local distinctiveness and character of the area and will be vulnerable to change, needing conservation and management of the character attributes. It is unlikely that the adverse effects upon the character can be reduced through mitigation measures.

High character sensitivity - The site is typical of the area's character and the proposed change is likely to be detrimental to this with no potential for a reduction of the effects through mitigation measures

Record how the proposed development relates to the resulting criteria.

Further reference

- Appendix 3 – Making the assessment

STEP 4 Visibility – Assess the visual effects of the development

Describe the visibility of the proposed development through the following boxes, and use these to come to a conclusion on the potential visual effects created by the development.

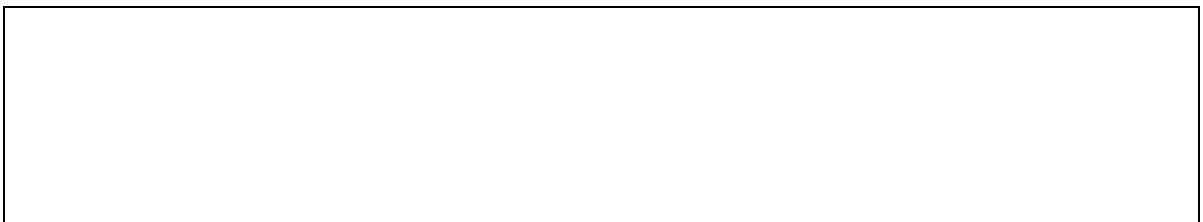
Views from points of public access - Can the development be viewed from any settlement, rural housing, public footpaths, roads or areas of open access land?

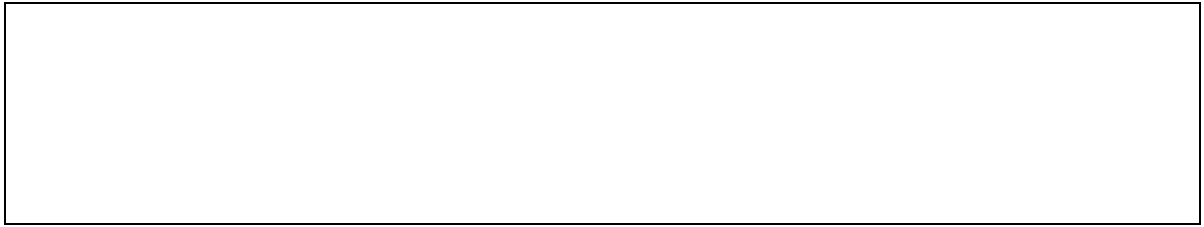


Important views, sightlines and vistas - Will the development interrupt or block any significant view or vista from a point of vantage to a natural or manmade feature? (including views out to sea)

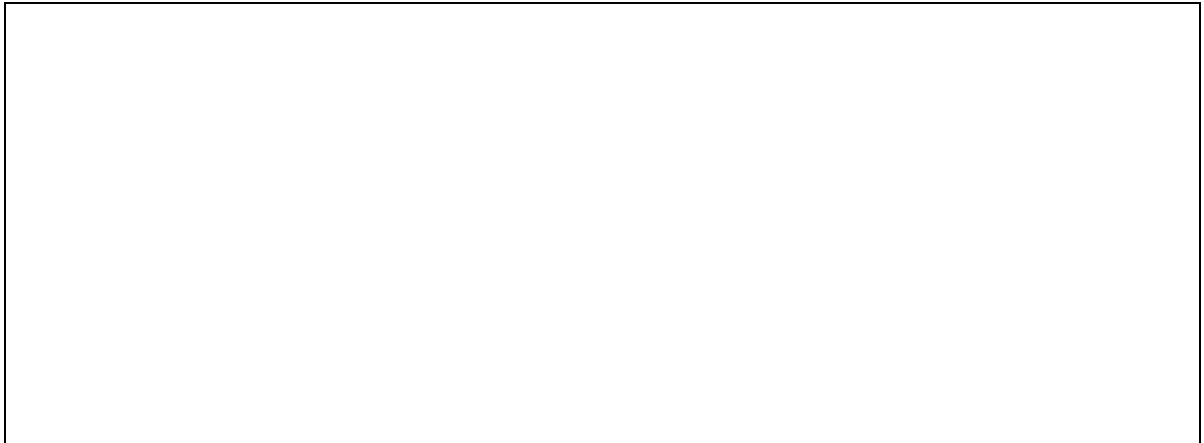


Visual merging of development - Will the development result in the visual merging either of two separate areas of built development within a settlement or the countryside or visual coalescence between two settlements or other development e.g. tall structures?





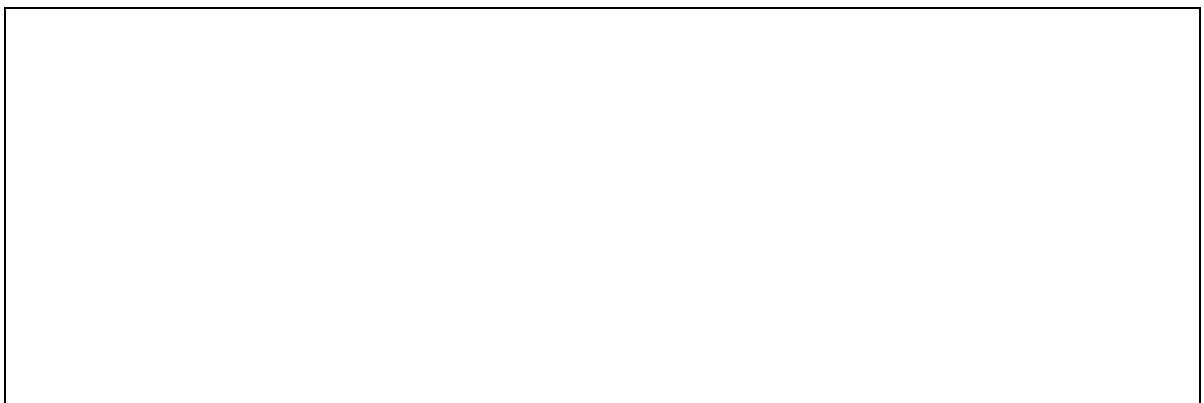
Screening - Will the change in the landscape be highly visible, based particularly on the nature of the landform and the extent of existing tree cover?



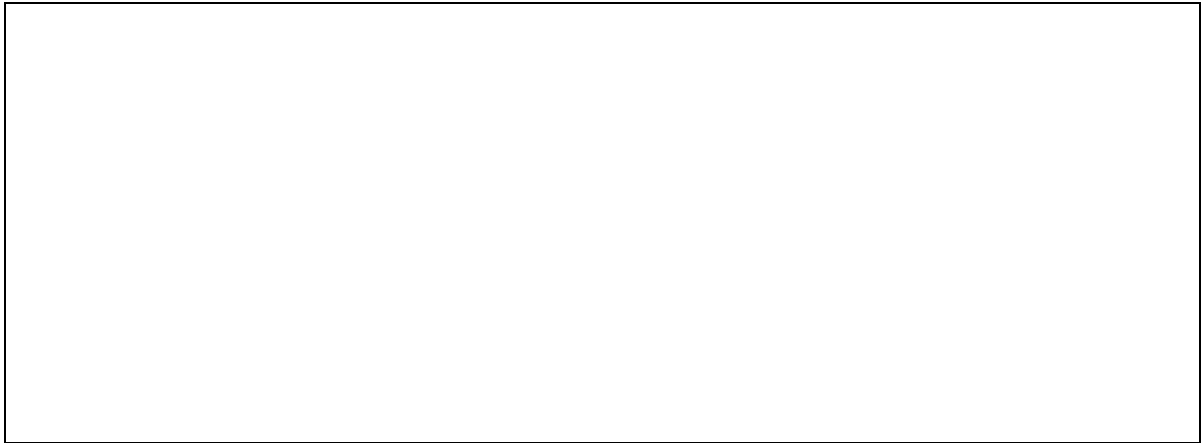
Numbers of people - Are significant numbers of people likely to perceive any changes e.g. as residents, visitors, people travelling through or engaged in recreation e.g. walking or as people working?



Invisibility and sight lines - Will the development interrupt any important lines of sight between features within the landscape, especially in designed landscapes



Visual influence and scale - Is the proposed development in scale with the surrounding landscape and other built features within it, does the development slot into the landscape in a non-intrusive way, or will it be highly visible with the landscape?



Cumulative impact - Are there other similar structures/ development within the visual setting of the development?



'Visual Sensitivity' criteria

Which of the following criteria best describes the visual effects created by the development?

No view of the development – the development would not be visible from any position within the surrounding landscape.

Low visual sensitivity- The development is only visible from a very small number of places, is not considered to be out of scale with the surrounding landscape, will be viewed by people considered to be of lower sensitivity to visual change, with likely potential for mitigation through pre application detailed design or amendment of the submitted application following the identification of residual visual effects (refer to Step 8).

Moderate visual sensitivity – The development will be partially visible; people viewing the development are more sensitive to the change in the view of the landscape, the nature and scale of the development is much greater with some potential for further mitigation measures to be built into the application design to reduce, or offset the visual effects, either through pre application discussions or amendments to the application proposal (refer to Step 8).

High visual sensitivity – The development is very visible from the landscape around the site, will be perceived by people considered to be of the highest sensitivity to visual changes in the landscape or by a significant number of people of a lower visual sensitivity, with little potential to mitigate the visual effects.

Record your reason for the criteria selected

Further reference

- Appendix 3 – Making the assessment
- Intranet mapping – vantage points, key attractions, scenic routes and PROW
- [Cornwall Council – Landscape Character Assessment](#)
- [Historic Landscape Character](#) [CISI Assessments](#)
- www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk www.erccis.co.uk

STEP 5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The results of the previous 'Character Sensitivity' and 'Visual Sensitivity' assessments are combined in the matrix below to give five levels of **Overall Landscape Sensitivity**.

The measurement of high, moderate or low, Overall Landscape Sensitivity is a measure of how sensitive the setting of the site is in terms of character and visual impact.

| | | Step 4 Visibility | | |
|--|---------------|-------------------|----------|------|
| | | Low | Moderate | High |
| Step 3 – Character Sensitivity to the Change | Low | L | LM | M |
| | Low Moderate | L | M | MH |
| | Moderate | LM | M | MH |
| | Moderate High | LM | M | H |
| | High | M | MH | H |

Low Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The landscape has potential to be positively enhanced through the development, and or there will be little discernible landscape impact .. Any small changes in landscape character will not be strongly visually expressed.

Low Moderate Overall Landscape Sensitivity

Small adverse changes in landscape character are unlikely to be strongly visually expressed. There is likely to be potential to mitigate the landscape and visual effects through the pre application development of the design, or through amendments to the submitted full planning application (refer to Step 8).

Moderate Overall Landscape Sensitivity

There will be some negative change in landscape character which will be visible, which may have the potential for mitigation of the landscape and visual effects through the pre application development of the design, or through amendments to the submitted full planning application (refer to Step 8)

Moderate High Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The development will result in a significant negative effect or change in landscape character that will be highly visible with unlikely potential for mitigation through changes to the design or amendments to the planning application.

High Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The development will result in significant negative effects on the landscape character that will be highly visible with no potential for mitigation, which would not in itself have an adverse impact upon visual amenity and landscape character.

Record how the proposed development relates to the resulting criteria.

Further reference

- Appendix 3 – Making the assessment

STEP 6 Landscape Value and Perception - Assessing the human response to landscape, the quality and condition

We value landscapes for their inherent interest, their contribution to local distinctiveness, sense of place, artistic inspiration and personal well being. Value can apply to areas of landscape as a whole, or to the individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions which contribute to the character of the landscape⁶. Using the following value considerations describe the subjective human response to the qualities of the existing landscape, and how those may change with the introduction of the proposed development.

Landscape Quality

Considering both the wider landscape and the separate individual elements / features which together make the landscape character :

- does the landscape have integrity where it is perceived as a whole and not broken up by development which does not reflect the landscape character?
- will the development enhance the existing character adding value to the landscape?
- is the landscape well maintained, free from landscape detractors such as power lines?
- is the landscape in good condition?
- does the site lie in, or within the setting of a designated landscape?

Scenic quality

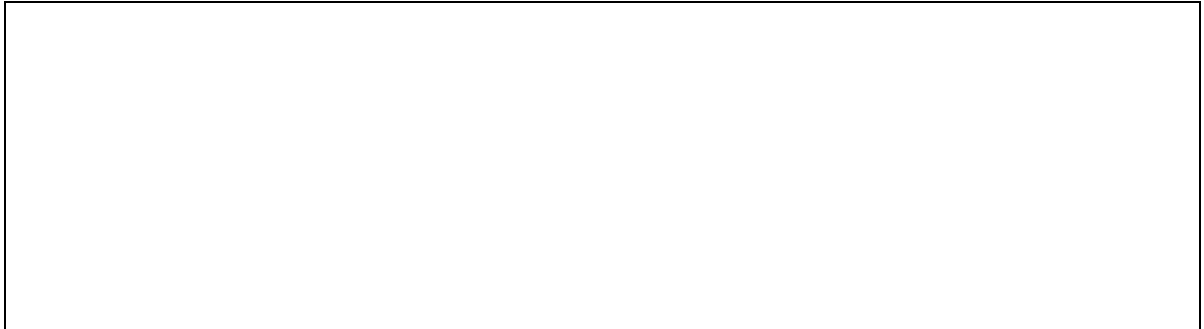
Does the site and surrounding landscape contain or offer views to valued landscape features or landmarks such as important trees church spires, lighthouses, engine houses?

Will the development remove a valued feature, interrupt or block any significant view from a vantage point to a natural or man made feature?

⁶ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ; Third Edition.

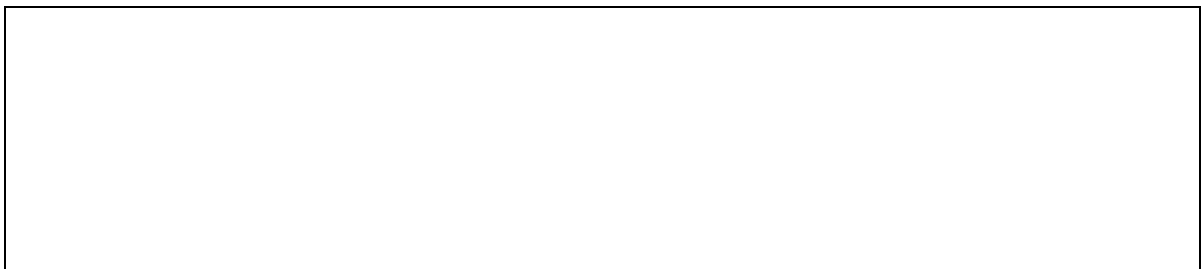
Does the landscape appeal to primarily but not wholly to the visual senses?

Has the visual quality of the landscape been described in guide books, or other literature?



Rarity

Does the landscape have a unique sense of place which is not commonly found at the local level across the Landscape Character Area, across Cornwall, or considered a good/rare example in national terms? What elements create this sense of place and will the development have an adverse effect upon them?



Representativeness

Does the area have particular features or elements of character which are considered particularly important examples eg. ancient field pattern of West Penwith?

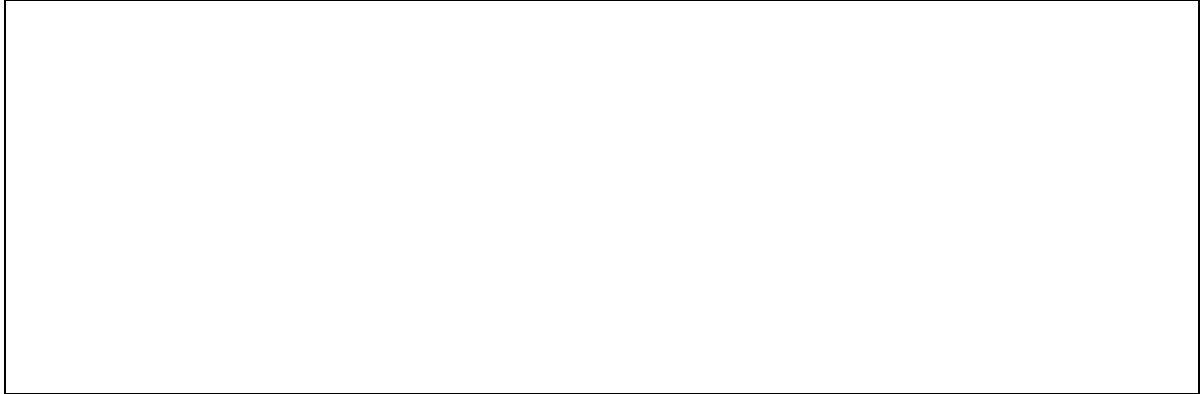


Conservation interest

Does this area have any local historic or cultural association from the Historic Environment Record ? Is this area nationally designated for its historic value e.g. World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument?

Does the landscape associated with the development have any known national and local ecological designations? Are there important wildlife corridors, or habitats which would be adversely affected by the development?

Does the landscape associated with the development have indicators of value eg. trees, hedges and woodland?



Recreational value

Is the area used by the local community for recreation and appreciation of the natural environment?

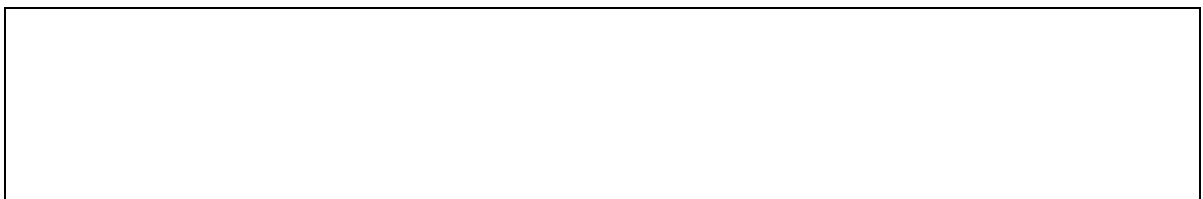
Is there evidence that the landscape is valued for recreation and enjoyment, where the experience of the landscape is important?



Perceptual aspects

What is the perception of the character, is it natural and undeveloped?

Is the landscape valued for its perceptual qualities notably its peaceful tranquillity or wild exposed ruggedness?



Associations

Are there known historic associations with the landscape, is it considered an important context to a historic feature, or relates to important individuals such as writers and artists?

'Landscape Value' criteria

Which of the following criteria best describes the value of the existing landscape, and how the development may affect this ?

No positive value – There is potential for the landscape to be enhanced by the development as it is currently degraded, of poor scenic quality, and has no noted conservation interest. Enhancement of the value of the existing character may be feasible through the pre-application design of the development proposals (refer to Step 8).

Low landscape value – This landscape has no national or local designation, but none the less is valued by the local community and demonstrates landscape and visual characteristics which positively contribute to the area's sense of place.

Moderate landscape value – this landscape is considered to positively contribute to the local distinctiveness, and character of Cornwall; contains quality examples of key characteristics described within the LCA; the proposed development has the potential to adversely affect the aesthetic and perceptual qualities of the existing landscape.

High landscape value – the scale or nature of the development has the potential to create significant adverse effects on one, or a combination of the following factors;

land within, or forming the setting of an internationally or nationally designated landscape;

notable landscape associations with Cornish culture;

significant adverse effects upon a vantage point, views or vistas of recognised importance;

a rare example of particular elements or features of a landscape;

Record your reason for the criteria selected

Further reference

- Appendix 2 – Table 1 – Condition
- Appendix 3 – Making the assessment
- [Cornwall Council – Landscape Character Assessment](#)
- Intranet mapping – indicates landscape designations, vantage points, public rights of way etc.
- www.cornwall.gov.uk/stoneguide
- www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk
- www.ercis.co.uk
- www.cornish-mining.org.uk
- [Historic Landscape Character](#)

STEP 7 Assessing Landscape Capacity

'Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character type⁷ or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects upon its character, or the overall change of that landscape character type'.⁸

The results of the previous 'Overall Landscape Sensitivity' and 'Landscape Value' assessments are combined in the matrix below to give five levels of **Landscape Capacity**. Here the significance attached to each of these values is reversed, a 'high Overall Sensitivity' and 'high' Landscape Value combine to give a rating of 'low' which describes a 'low' capacity for the landscape to accept the development and vice versa.

| | | Step 6 - Landscape Value | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------|------|
| | | Low | Moderate | High |
| Step 5 - Overall Sensitivity | Low | H | MH | M |
| | Low Moderate | H | MH | M |
| | Moderate | MH | M | ML |
| | Moderate High | M | M | L |
| | High | ML | ML | L |

High capacity - There will be little or no impact on the landscape through the development. There is potential for the development to positively enhance the landscape.

Moderate High capacity - There will be some negative change in landscape character. Through an iterative pre application design process there is the potential for significant landscape and visual effects to be avoided or reduced. In the determination of a full planning application landscape and visual effects may be reduced by mitigation measures introduced as amendments to the proposal (refer to Step 8).

⁷ Cornwall classifies its landscape through landscape character areas and not landscape character types

⁸ The Countryside Agency & Scottish Natural Heritage (2004) Topic Paper 6 – Techniques and Criteria for Judging landscape Capacity and Sensitivity.

Moderate capacity - There will be an extensive negative change in landscape character and visual amenity, with possible potential for mitigation measures to be embedded with the pre application design process or as amendments to a full application (refer to Step 8).

Moderate Low capacity - The development will result in significant adverse effects, on the landscape character and visual amenity with limited potential for mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or remedy the remaining identified effects (refer to Step 8).

Low capacity - The development will result severe harm/destruction of landscape character which mitigation measures can not prevent, reduce or remedy.

Record how the proposed development relates to the resulting criteria.

STEP 8 Mitigation

Mitigation measures should be designed to prevent, reduce, remedy or offset any significant adverse landscape and visual effects associated with a development proposal, from the design stage, through construction, operation and to decommissioning. They should in themselves not result in negative landscape and visual effects but enable the development to respond to landscape character and visual amenity more positively.

This document can be used to

- inform pre application discussions where there is scope to suggest mitigation measures which can be further incorporated into the development's design
- highlight potentially significant landscape and visual effects which have not been prevented, reduced, or off set in the submitted full planning application.

Mitigation measures fall into three categories termed the 'mitigation heirachy'⁹ :

1. **Primary measures** – developed through an iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded in the project design, where significant landscape and visual effects can be prevented or avoided through choices relating to site selection and the layout of the proposal.
2. **Standard construction and operational management practices** – for reducing identified environmental effects which can't be prevented or avoided at each stage of the development. These mitigation measures can be discussed pre-application/scoping and may include:
 - redesign / re-siting details of the development
 - creating new, or altering existing landforms; amending site levels
 - introducing planting which reflects the local landscape character
 - careful consideration of building form and massing
 - choice of building materials and finishes
 - reducing the effects of light pollution
3. **Secondary measures** – are designed to reduce adverse effects which were not built into the final development proposals, which can be identified through the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), however it is preferable that the LVIA be an iterative process developed in discussion with Cornwall Council to remove the need for secondary mitigation measures.

Where significant landscape and visual effects can't be avoided or markedly reduced then mitigation through offsetting, remedying, or compensating needs to be considered. This however should be considered as a last resort as in many cases it is not possible to

^{9 9} Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ; Third Edition

replace elements which have been lost to development with new features of the same landscape, visual, ecological, or historic value.

Enhancement is a term which has been used through this document to highlight opportunities to improve the existing environment's landscape character and visual amenity as part of the design and siting of new development. This can be achieved through improved land management, restoration of habitat, natural and historic features.

Further reference

- Appendix 3 – Making the assessment

Landscape capacity assessment overview

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Assessment date : | Landscape Character Area number (s): |
| Planning application ref: Development type : | Location of development site : |

The following is a summary of the assessment of the landscape capacity to accept the above development, and is taken from the 'Development Management Toolkit - Assessing Landscape Capacity'

STEP 1 Character Significance - the character of the landscape without the proposed development

STEP 2 Character Vulnerability - how the character would change if the development were to take place?

STEP 3 Character Sensitivity To Change - how sensitive the existing character is to the proposed change

STEP 4 Visibility – the visual impact of the development

STEP 5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

STEP 6 Value and perception - the human response to views, landscape quality and condition

STEP 7 Landscape Capacity

STEP 8 Mitigation

Appendix 1 - Desk Survey - Initial considerations and getting an overview

Obtaining the information

All of the Landscape Character Area descriptions (LCA) which cover the extent of the development site should be considered. The descriptive information will be held on the landscape pages of Cornwall Council' website

www.cornwalllandscapes.org.uk

Decisions at boundaries

Although the Character Areas are defined by mapped boundaries, in reality boundaries are sometimes not so clearly defined and different landscapes can grade into one another. Areas of land which sit on or close to a boundary, may exhibit characteristics of both adjacent Landscape Character Areas.

Where the development straddles the boundary of two or more Landscape Character Areas, there is likely to be distinct character differences and a separate assessment for each part of the site within a different character area may need to be undertaken.

Setting

The consideration of impact on land outside the immediate boundary of a proposed development site is necessary when assessing impact upon landscape character and visual impact. Taking a look at how a development may impact on its wider surroundings is essential as sites do not exist in isolation; rather they sit within the landscape and have a relationship with it.

There are two types of setting, Landscape Character Setting and Visual Setting and it is important they are considered separately. Landscapes which are of common character are often much larger than an area which can be viewed from a single vantage point

eg Bodmin Moor is a large expanse of upland moorland with a common character, yet it is impossible to view all of Bodmin Moor from a single place.

For the above reason, it is not enough simply to consider the impact of the development on a site in its immediate visual setting. The impact of the development in the wider landscape context must also be assessed, and this may mean that a wider geographical area should be taken into account when assessing the impact on landscape character.

Setting is explored in further detail in the assessment guidance (Appendix 3, Steps 1,2 and 3)

Pressures for change and condition

Information on Condition, and Pressures for Change is available within the LCA description. It is important to be aware of the condition of the landscape as described and the forces acting upon it in order to understand how this landscape has been changed and how it may change in the future. The condition description should indicate if this change is positive or negative. Development which acts as a force for change that will result in a deterioration of landscape condition is likely to be inappropriate; conversely development may have the potential to restore or enhance landscapes which are in degraded condition. More information can be gained at site visit stage about the condition of the landscape in that locality and this information considered as part of the value assessment.

Vision/ Objectives and Planning and Land Management Guidelines

The Character Area Vision and Objectives indicate the desired state of the landscape in this area. The CA Planning and Land Management Guidelines should set out steps which should be taken to achieve the desired state. Development which contradicts the guidelines may not be appropriate; similarly each development should seek to positively address some of the recommendations set out.

Appendix 2 - Site Visit: Getting an overview

Landscapes are made up of a combination of different elements or attributes.

These attributes combine in different ways to make the landscape distinctive to a particular area. These attributes are described using the same headings, following the same format within each of the 40 Landscape Character Area descriptions.

The different attributes described within each Landscape Character Area descriptions are outlined in **Table 1** below which also gives an overview of how these attributes relate to different aspects of a development.

Table 1: Landscape Attributes

| Landscape Attributes | Aspects of development |
|--|---|
| <p>Geology and soils</p> <p>Geology defines the character of the landscape and the associated stone is often used in vernacular buildings and structures.</p> <p>This characteristic will be exhibited in cliffs, rocky outcrops, quarries, stone faced hedges and walls and buildings built of local stone</p> | <p>Materials design</p> <p>Are the materials used in keeping with local vernacular?</p> <p>Will local stone be used in the construction?</p> <p>www.cornwall.gov.uk/stoneguide</p> <p>www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk</p> <p>www.ercis.co.uk</p> <p>www.cornish-mining.org.uk</p> |
| <p>Topography and drainage</p> <p>Topography influences the type of development that is possible.</p> | <p>Siting</p> <p>Is the development designed with land contours? Does the design minimise the visibility of the development within the landscape?</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Does the drainage/ SUDs plan for the development reflect characteristic patterns of rivers, streams and areas of standing water?</p> <p>www.environment-agency.gov.uk</p> <p>www.ciria.org.uk/suds/</p> |
| <p>Biodiversity</p> <p>The main biodiversity action plan (BAP) habitats are described</p> | <p>Action for biodiversity</p> <p>Will semi-natural habitats be lost due to the development?</p> <p>Are Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats are conserved as part of the development?</p> <p>How can the design best achieve creation and enhancement of habitats and species within the site?</p> <p>NB. The landscape character area descriptions will only give an overview of the biodiversity value of an area. It is important to refer to the Cornwall Wildlife Trust Biodiversity Best Practice Guidance for Planners¹⁰ and then if necessary to take further advice from Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Cornwall Council or Natural England</p> <p>www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk</p> <p>www.ercis.co.uk</p> <p>www.natureonthemap.org.uk</p> <p>www.jncc.gov.uk</p> |
| <p>Land use</p> <p>The information will describe the typical land use in human terms, usually connected to economic activity e.g. agriculture</p> | <p>Sympathetic Land Use</p> <p>Will land use as a result of the development and any mitigation measures be sympathetic with the land use as described, particularly traditional land uses?</p> |

¹⁰ Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Planning Good Practice Guidance for Cornwall', November 2007

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>This information is best used with the Pressures for Change/ Condition information. Do any proposed changes to land use contribute to negative pressures for change or negative elements of condition as described?</p> <p>Historic Landscape Character</p> <p>www.cornish-mining.org.uk</p> |
| <p>Land Cover</p> <p>Describes the visible nature of the land such as pasture or tree cover</p> | <p>Sympathetic land cover and visibility</p> <p>Will the development result in changes to the land cover as described and will this change be very visible within the landscape e.g. conifer planting in a treeless moorland landscape.</p> <p>Is there potential to change land cover for the benefit of the landscape to be more sympathetic to the land cover as described? e.g. by reversion from tarmac to more informal grass surfaces</p> |
| <p>Field pattern</p> <p>Landscape patterns such as the size and shape of fields or woodland and the type of field boundary e.g. granite Cornish hedge</p> | <p>Do boundaries that form part of the development reflect the landscape pattern in their layout, design and use of materials?</p> <p>Where the proposals including built structures do these disturb or change historical field and woodland pattern?</p> <p>Will the development result in removal of traditional field boundaries?</p> <p>Is there potential within the development to restore Cornish hedges in degraded condition or to build new hedges to restore a degraded field pattern?</p> |

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| | <p>Does the development respect the current scale of the field pattern?</p> <p>NB Ancient Field Patterns are an indication of possible important buried archaeological features and have historic importance in their own right. It is important to consult the Historic Landscape Character Assessment and the Cornwall Historic Environment Record (HER) and take further advice from Cornwall Council's Historic Environment Service or English Heritage.</p> <p>Historic Landscape Character</p> <p>www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk</p> <p>www.erccis.co.uk</p> <p>www.natureonthemap.org.uk</p> <p>www.jncc.gov.uk</p> |
| <p>Transport pattern</p> <p>The scale, direction, shape and construction materials of the roads and rights of way; how they relate to topography and a description of associated boundaries</p> | <p>Will the traditional transport pattern as described be changed e.g. roads widened or straightened?</p> <p>Will road furniture respect local distinctiveness in scale and materials, guarding against urbanisation in rural areas. e.g. restoration of a traditional fingerpost instead of a new plastic sign</p> <p>Are the boundary features associated with roads and rights of way development consistent with character, are of local vernacular materials, and in the case of Cornish hedges, use local stone and pattern e.g. The use of granite or slate stiles where appropriate instead of wooden gateways.</p> <p>If any part of the rights of way network form part of the development, can</p> |

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| | trackways and paths be maintained in their current character whilst avoiding urbanisation e.g. tarmacing? |
| <p>Settlement pattern</p> <p>Settlement patterns such as the height, scale, massing and distribution of rural dwellings/ farmsteads/ hamlets/ villages.</p> <p>The space between built development is as much a part of settlement pattern as the buildings themselves. In rural areas this is usually agricultural land which leads to a close association of the settlement pattern attribute with the field pattern attribute.</p> | <p>Will the development result in a change in the shape of the settlement?</p> <p>Does the development respect characteristic settlement density and guard against negative effects of cumulative development?</p> <p>Is the development consistent with the height, scale and shape of buildings characteristic of the area and the general scale of the landscape?</p> <p>Does the design and use of materials respect buildings of local character?</p> <p>Would proposed built development fit with the characteristic distribution of dwellings in the area?</p> <p>CISI Assessments</p> |
| <p>Historic features</p> <p>Historic features which enrich the landscape and cover large areas in places such as the World Heritage Sites [WHS].</p> | <p>Do proposals respect and protect historic features in their setting with consideration for the existence of field archaeology?</p> <p>NB The Landscape descriptions will only give an overview of the historic value of an area. It is important to consult the Historic Landscape Character Assessment and the Cornwall Sites and Monuments Record and take further advice from Cornwall Council's Historic Environment Service or English Heritage.</p> <p>Historic Landscape Character</p> <p>www.historic-cornwall.org.uk</p> <p>www.cornish-mining.org.uk</p> |
| <p>Aesthetic and sensory</p> <p>This describes the way the landscape is experienced and the more subjective elements of landscape such</p> | <p>Will the tranquillity of the site be degraded maintained or enhanced by the development?</p> |

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| as tranquillity, scenic beauty, sense of openness. | Traffic movement, noise, construction impacts, visibility and excessive road infrastructure together with smells, materials, colour and texture are just some of the factors in the consideration of the aesthetic and sensory elements of the landscape. |
| Distinctive features Distinctive features e.g. Church towers help to make one landscape character area different from the other. | Will distinctive features of the landscape be conserved and enhanced in terms of their condition and their setting within the landscape, considering visibility and views. E.g. will new development block an iconic view of a distinctive feature from the edge of a settlement? |
| Condition The condition description is an important source of information that describes changes that have taken place that have had a landscape impact which can be explored on a site visit Condition indicates how well elements or features in the landscape, such as hedges or woodland, are managed, the health of the landscape in terms of its character, nature conservation value and the effects of existing built development such as housing and utilities structures. | Will the development contribute to negative trajectory of change in terms of the condition as described? i.e. Will it cause further degradation in landscape condition? Is there potential for the development to improve landscape condition? Will the development contribute to existing degrading development resulting in cumulative negative impact on landscape condition? |
| Pressures/forces for change | Will the development contribute to any negative forces for change as described? www.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk www.tamarvalley.org.uk www.historic-cornwall.org.uk www.cornishmining.org.uk |

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| | An Assessment of the Landscape Sensitivity to On Shore Wind Energy & Large Scale Photovoltaic Development In Cornwall (2011 Land Use Consultants) |
| Planning and land management guidelines | <p>Does the development contribute to any of the planning and land management guidelines set out?</p> <p>Does the development contradict any of the guidelines?</p> <p>Does the development have the potential to contribute to the guidelines?</p> |

Appendix 3 - Making the assessment

In order to make sound judgements on the sensitivity of the landscape and its capacity to absorb proposed changes, assessments must be made of the following factors:

- The Character Significance of the site and its setting in making a contribution to the wider landscape character (Step 1)
- The Character Vulnerability to the proposed change (Step 2)
- The Visibility of the proposed change within the landscape (Step 4)
- The Value of the landscape to the local community and society in general (Step 6)
- The Mitigation/ enhancement potential of the proposal (Step 8)

Step 1 Character significance

It is most important to assess the extent to which the development site and its setting, in an unaltered state are significant to the landscape character of the area. The significance assessment does not consider the development proposed, simply the current site and its relationship to the Landscape Character Assessment.

The Landscape Character Area information describes what is locally distinct in the site and setting of the development. It is important to consider to what level the site contributes to the character of the area as described within the Landscape Character Assessment. This is most easily achieved by breaking down the landscape into its individual components, or attributes. Each attribute is described in detail in the Landscape Character Assessment (also see Appendix 2, Table 1).

Variations in character will occur within a Character Area. Flexibility must be built in to allow for landscape attributes present within the site or site setting that are not described within the Character Assessment. Any other character attributes identified at site visit stage need to be recorded and then assessed for their vulnerability to the proposed development in Step 2.

It is very unlikely that the site and setting would not contribute to landscape character to some extent, particularly in a rural situation. However if for some reason the site and its setting did not contribute to character in any way, this would result in a 'none' value for significance. Sites and setting returning a 'none' value would be highly disturbed and degraded in terms of character and therefore would be also likely to have the most scope for enhancement. In the event of a 'none' value being recorded for significance, it would not be possible to assess vulnerability and take the next step in the process so it would be necessary to proceed to step 5 and undertake a mitigation/ enhancement potential assessment.

Character setting

As a guide, each attribute of character should be considered to its common extent. For example if a development was proposed within a landscape character area with a prehistoric field pattern, the impact of the development upon the field pattern should be assessed across the whole character area, or even a group of character areas which shared that attribute. The National Joint Character Areas which cover Cornwall at a larger, national scale can provide context in this instance. For example, 'The Cornish Killas' National Joint Character Area covers the slate killas which covers the extent of the slate geology of Cornwall.

Variation in character

Variations in character occur within character areas and some attributes vary more than others within each area. Areas of high biodiversity may occur in parts of a character area e.g. wooded valleys, but biodiverse habitat may be absent in other parts of the character area. The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study 2005-2007 defines landscape character at a smaller scale level, with Landscape Description Units. These are the building blocks of the character areas and can assist in pinpointing these variations.

Distribution of character

As well as variations of a character attribute within a Character Area, it is also important to consider the spatial distribution of an attribute within a character area. For example, settlements are usually scattered throughout a character area but usually they are distributed throughout the area in a common way e.g. in a clustered pattern, evenly spaced. It is important to consider the space between attributes as much as the attribute itself and consider how new development can fit into and respect this distribution.

Unaltered settings

The setting of some historic sites may be little changed from the period when the land was first used by human beings. Largely unaltered settings for certain types of landscapes, particularly more ancient ones, may be rare survivals and especially vulnerable to modern intrusions.

Assessing setting in practice

The assessor should examine and familiarise with the character area description at desk study stage and if necessary also consider adjacent character areas, particularly if a proposed site is on or close to a character area boundary.

Step 2 Character vulnerability to the type of change

The next step brings the plans for the proposed development into the process in order to assess how likely the attributes of character present within the site and its setting would be to adversely change if the development were to take place. The assessor should consider the size (magnitude) of the change caused by the development and the area (extent) over which the change would happen across the site within its setting.

In completing Step 1 the relevant elements of character within the site and the setting should have been identified. The next step is to determine how vulnerable these aspects of character are to the proposed change, giving a 'High', 'Moderate', 'Low' or 'No Change' assessment. In assessing vulnerability we are assessing adverse change or harm to landscape character as a result of the development. If the change is deemed to be positive i.e. having enhancement benefits for landscape character, then an assessment of 'no change' should be recorded. It is important to consider both the immediate development site and the surrounding area (see Step 1 Significance above for guidance on setting).

As with significance, if a 'No Change' assessment is arrived at for vulnerability, the next step would be to assess the enhancement potential of the proposal at Step 8.

Step 3 Character Sensitivity to change

This judgement is based on the interaction between significance and vulnerability and is based on the strength of landscape character and the response of that character to the proposed development.

Landscape Character Sensitivity gives an indication of the representation of landscape character in the locality of the development site and how stable and robust that character is to the proposed change.

Step 4 Visibility Assessment

The visibility assessment is based on the nature of change and the interaction of the locality with visual elements of the landscape. When considering visibility, seasonal changes will need to be taken into account. For example if a site visit is carried out in summer a site could appear well screened but this may not be the case in winter when the trees have no canopy. The results tables suggest a series of questions to consider when assessing visibility based on the following:

Visual Setting

Consideration should be given to the impact of developments on wider visual setting. This consideration should extend to the effects of any necessary infrastructure (such as power transmission lines, access roads and signage) and to the individual as well as the cumulative impact of developments. Seasonal variations in visual impact should also be considered.

Factors which should be borne in mind when assessing the impact of developments upon visual setting are set out below. The list of considerations on visibility is by no means exhaustive and there is flexibility in terms of the potential weight attached to each. This allows the assessor to use professional judgement on the visibility assessment whilst recording assumptions made will still achieve transparency.

Views from points of public access

Can the development be viewed from any settlement, rural housing, public footpaths, roads or areas of open access land? The rest of the assessment on visibility should be based on the carefully consideration of points of public access from which the development may be able to be seen, once completed and distance views should be considered.

Important views, sightlines and vistas

Will the development interrupt or block any significant view from a point of vantage to a natural or man made feature (including views out to sea)

Visual merging of development

Will the development result in

- the visual merging either of two separate areas of built development within a settlement or the countryside
- visual coalescence between two settlements
- visual merging of any other kind of development e.g. tall structures into a single view.

Visual merging/ coalescence has a relationship to cumulative development (see below)

Screening

Will the change in the landscape be highly visible, based particularly on the nature of the landform and the extent of existing tree cover? Will the development break the skyline when viewed from areas of public access?

Numbers of people

Are significant numbers of people likely to perceive any changes e.g. as residents, visitors, people travelling through or engaged in recreation e.g. walking or as people working?

Visual dominance and scale

Developments vary widely in their type, size and extent, from a small section of new Cornish hedge to a large housing development or a wind farm. The planner must consider if the new introduction will dominate that landscape and whether the proposed scale of development respects the scale of the landscape and features within the landscape. The settlement pattern and field pattern attributes within the Character Area description can assist in this judgement. Where an historic feature (such as an engine house or a church tower) is the most visually dominant feature in the surrounding landscape, adjacent construction which could compete for that dominance (such as a mobile phone mast) may be inappropriate. Equally if the field pattern is of a small scale, a large structure such as a wind turbine would be out of scale.

Invisibility and sight lines

Intervisibility of built or natural landscape features should be considered. For example certain archaeological or historic landscape features were intended to be seen from other historic sites and designed/ estate landscapes invariably involve key vistas, prospects, panoramas and sight-lines, or the use of topography to add drama. Developments should respect this intervisibility and development which interrupts or obscures this intervisibility may be inappropriate.

Vistas and views

Views are usually taken from a point of human vantage such as from the edge of a settlement or from a footpath cresting the brow of a hill. They extend to a focus point or feature of interest. These focus points can be man made such as an engine house or monument, or they can be natural such as a granite tor or river estuary. In Cornwall, views to the sea are very important to reinforce the County's coastal character.

When assessing visual setting these important views and vistas should be carefully considered and development which interrupts or entirely blocks a view may not be appropriate.

Cumulative impact

Cumulative impact is basically answers the question are there other similar structures within the visual setting of the development? Cumulative effects can be described and assessed from static viewpoints, and as sequential effects as you move through the landscape.

Similar structures will mean structures of similar size, shape and scale for example wind turbines, telegraph poles and telecommunications masts may be classed as 'similar

structures' as they are all tall vertical structures. Generally cumulative impact is negative where the development is considered a detractor in terms of character as further development/ structures will compound and add to that impact. In other words existing development should not be a reason to add further development.

Step 5 Landscape Sensitivity

This element is described under Appendix 3 – Making the assessment

This is an intermediate judgement made that combines Landscape Sensitivity to the Type of Change with Visibility, the visual response of the landscape to the type of change, building up an extra layer of detail.

This is an intermediate judgement which enables the officer to assess the interaction between the visibility of the proposed change and landscape character sensitivity to the proposed change.

Step 6 Value Assessment

Value needs to be considered not just for the site, but also for the site within its landscape setting, in order to try to bring the human response to the landscapes into the assessment.

Human response is partly what turns land into the concept of landscape; therefore it's important to consider if current human responses to the landscape in question are positive ones, and to include this in making the decision on the appropriateness of the development. Landscape quality can also be linked to landscape value on the assumption that well maintained and well looked after areas are valued more than landscapes which are in poor condition and have become degraded.

There should not be overreliance on designations as the sole indicator of value.¹¹

The set of suggested questions is by no means exhaustive and there is flexibility in terms of the potential weight attached to each consideration. Value is much more subjective than the other assessments and local knowledge of the assessor could be of great benefit when assessing landscape value, provided that any extra information used to assess value is recorded as part of the process.

¹¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment ; Third Edition

Step 7 Landscape Capacity

The capacity judgement combines Overall Sensitivity with the Value placed upon that landscape by society and community. Sensitivity judgements tend to be reasonably objective and value free. However it is necessary to consider human responses to the landscape, how people value the landscape and landscape quality as part of the decision making process. These aspects are considered in making the final judgement on capacity. Landscape Capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character is able to accommodate the development without significant effects on its character or overall change.

The significance of a locality in terms of local landscape character (i.e. the contribution which the locality makes to landscape character) is likely to be inherent and will not change if a different development is proposed. Vulnerability and visibility will change according to the type of development that is proposed. To a certain extent, the value attached to a landscape is inherent, although the degree to which that value is compromised will change according to the type of development proposed and the officer will need to pay regard to this when making a capacity assessment.

Step 8 Mitigation/ Enhancement potential

Mitigation measures need to be considered throughout the design process and for each stage of the development through construction, operation and decommissioning (where appropriate). This step can be used to examine how identified impacts on landscape character can be avoided altogether or to what extent they could be mitigated. Landscape mitigation should be designed to suit the existing landscape character and the needs of the locality, respecting and building on local landscape distinctiveness and helping to address any relevant existing issues in the landscape (enhancement).

Appendix 2 - Table 1 describes some of the issues which may need to be considered during the design and mitigation process.

This step can also be used to set out how the development will enhance the landscape in the following situations where the :

- landscape is degraded/ in poor condition and currently makes no positive contribution to landscape character
- development is of such a nature that no adverse impacts on landscape character could be identified

Using this Toolkit as part of pre-application discussions will highlight sensitive and vulnerable elements of the character where mitigation measures need to be considered to ideally avoid,

or reduce adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity. These can then be integrated into the scheme before the application is submitted for determination.

When using the Toolkit to assess the capacity of the landscape as part of the determination of a full planning application the assessment process will still highlight the sensitive and vulnerable character and visual elements of the landscape, and a judgement can be reached as to whether the proposed mitigation measures (if any) are sufficient to reduce or offset the adverse significant effects, or whether amendments need to be made to the scheme.

