

St Stephen in Brannel Landscape Evidence Report

Planning Policy Background

National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment (para 174) whilst good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities (para 124). Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. Planning policies should:

- Protect and enhance valued landscapes (Para 174a)
- Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services (Para 174b)
- Not permit major developments in AONBs, where great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty, ensure that development conserves and enhances the landscape character and scenic beauty of the AONB(Para 176)
- Protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason (Para 185b).
- Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation (Para 185c).
- Be grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics, identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development [Para 127)
- Ensure that developments function well, are visually attractive, are sympathetic to local character and history, allow an appropriate amount and mix, and create places that are safe, inclusive and healthy (para 130
- Not permit development of poor design especially where it fails to reflect local design policies. (Para 134).

Cornwall Local Plan.

Key messages from the Cornwall Local Plan include

- Objective 10(a) within key theme number 4 states to 'respect the distinctive character of Cornwall's diverse landscapes'.
- Policy 2 – Spatial Strategy states that new development should 'maintain and respect the special character of Cornwall, recognising that all urban and rural landscapes, designated and undesignated, are important'... by identifying 'the value and sensitivity, of the character and importance of landscapes, biodiversity and geodiversity and historic assets'
- Policy 23 – Natural Environment – states that development proposals should sustain local distinctiveness and character and protect and enhance Cornwall's natural environment where development should be of
 - 2. *'of an appropriate scale, mass and design that recognises and respects landscape character of both designated and undesignated landscapes... 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) 'Development within the Heritage Coast and / or Areas of Great Landscape Value should maintain the character and distinctive landscape qualities of such areas'

Other plans and studies

'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan, includes policies within Chapter 2 'Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes' and Goal 6 'Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment' which directly relate to the **Natural Environment and Landscape theme**.

The **Cornwall Climate Emergency Development Plan Document 2021** recognises that the landscape makes an important contribution to climate resilience and also that measures to tackle climate change can have an impact on the landscape, which in some cases may need to be mitigated. It encourages land management changes that will enhance biodiversity, help reduce the consequences of climate change (such as flooding), and improve carbon capture, whilst ensuring that renewable energy schemes do not result in visual impacts that might be judged to harm important landscapes and historic settings. At the time of writing this report, the current version was available here: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/1gkn3rla/sd01-cedpd-draft-master-with-edits.pdf>

The '**Cornwall landscape character best practice guide**' says that for 'smaller-scale development particularly in rural areas:

- consider how new development can foster the existing rural character
- ensure residential entrances and approaches avoid over-engineered solutions, favouring designs which follow the site topography
- retain trees and Cornish hedges, ditches and walls, especially where these form backdrops, soften roof lines, and produce screening. Replace features which have to be removed to fit in with the existing landscape pattern
- reflect vernacular and local rural detailing at gates, entranceways and boundary treatments
- retain grass verges and avoid upstanding kerbs and highway bollards, avoiding the extension of garden features such as close-mown lawns, flowerbeds and ornamental shrubs beyond the garden boundary, as these have the effect of suburbanisation of rural lanes
- site garages and other utility features such as rubbish bins and fuel storage away from property frontages in screened areas
- locate parking and turning spaces at the sides and rear of buildings, or within courtyards, reducing their visibility from the highway
- provide new native structure planting of Cornish hedges, copses, shelterbelts, (where appropriate) to help integrate new buildings into the landscape. Carefully consider the use of exotic species, especially evergreens such as cypresses

Baseline

Topography

St Stephen-in-Brannel is one of the largest and most diverse Parishes in Cornwall covering some 9,000 acres. It occupies a broad, relatively sheltered basin between higher moorland; running from the Karslake Plateau in the north, 900 feet above sea level, down to the steeply wooded valleys of the River Fal, below Coombe [See Figure 1].

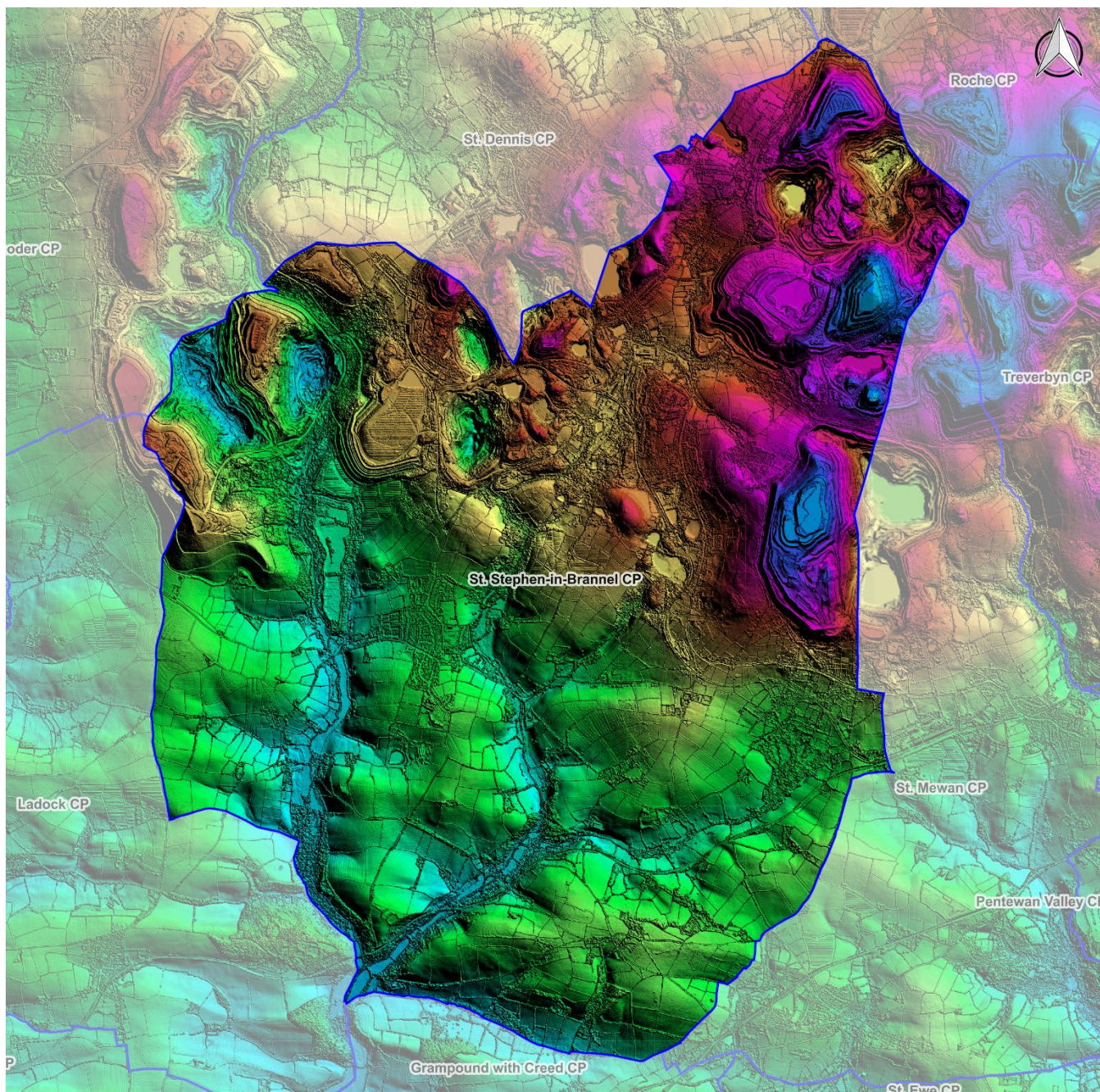


Figure 1: Topography [Source: OS maps, APG Aerial dataset via the Public Sector Geospatial Agreement]

Landscape character

National Character Areas – England has 159 National Character Areas (NCAs). Each NCA represents an area of distinct and recognisable character at the national scale. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape, not county or district boundaries. This makes them a good framework for decision-making and planning for future change. Each NCA is described in an interactive ‘profile’. Each profile first outlines the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape. It then explains how the landscape has changed over time, and what is influencing current changes, with reference to available data and information. Finally, it presents an outline of the ecosystem services provided by the landscape. Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) offer guidance on key issues. They aim to help guide land management and other activities to strengthen character and strengthen resilience to pressures such as climate change. NCAs can help inform choices about land management and landscape change, providing valuable evidence to help inform planning decisions.

St Stephen in Brannel Parish is within two NCAs which are broad but provide some context to the character of the Parish:

152. Cornish Killas – The Cornish Killas National Character Area (NCA) forms the main body of the Cornish landmass around the granite outcrops of Bodmin Moor, Hensbarrow, Carnmenellis, West Penwith and The Lizard NCAs. It has an open character and general lack of tree cover, affords long views across Cornwall to neighbouring NCAs and out to sea. The NCA has been inhabited by humans for thousands of years and retains a rich variety of historical assets, including cairns, barrows, Neolithic to iron-age hill forts and defended systems, field systems, cliff castles and coastal defences, medieval castles, medieval wayside crosses and a wealth of nonconformist chapels and derelict mining buildings. This habitation is also reflected in the medieval field patterns defined by the iconic Cornish hedges. The area has seen great change, but retains a strong sense of identity, with the distinct Cornish culture attracting many devotees.

154. Hensbarrow. - is named after Hensbarrow Downs, the granite hills which are the focus of the china clay industry. The world-famous Eden Project is located in an old china clay pit in the Hensbarrow Downs area. To the north, Goss Moor forms an open and wild landscape that is not untouched by human infrastructure such as roads and electricity pylons and historical tin extraction. The eastern side of the NCA is an area of contrast between the wild and open granite tors, the biodiverse heath and willow carr and an idyllic pattern of fields bounded by Cornish hedges and woodlands. Settlements are fairly small and the local vernacular is of granite or cob and granite buildings, roofed with slate and sometimes with hanging slate; the locally produced concrete blocks are also a distinctive feature. The geology is dominated by granite and its associated tors and mineral deposits and china clay has had a huge impact on the Hensbarrow Downs area. The rich history of the NCA is easy to see and visitors are drawn to the relics of mining heritage that scatter the landscape, both from rock mining and china clay extraction. 10% of the NCA is classified as being publicly accessible. This allows for other recreational activities such as walking, cycling and horse riding. The Hensbarrow area has long been a landscape of dynamic change and this pattern continues as new solar farms are constructed and as china clay continues to be extracted from the landscape. [Sources: National Character Areas at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/587130>]

Cornwall Local Landscape Assessment - At the local level, the Cornwall LCA describes variations in character between different areas and types of landscape, providing an evidence base for local development frameworks and plans, articulating what people perceive as distinctive and special about all landscapes in Cornwall. It also sets out strategies and guidelines for the protection, management and planning of the landscape. The following LCAs cover the Neighbourhood Plan area, as viewed on the Cornwall Interactive Mapping Tool:

- CA13: Fal Ria, Truro and Falmouth
- CA14: Newlyn Downs
- CA17: St Austell or Hensbarrow China Clay Area
- CA40 Gerrans, Veryan and Mevagissey Bays

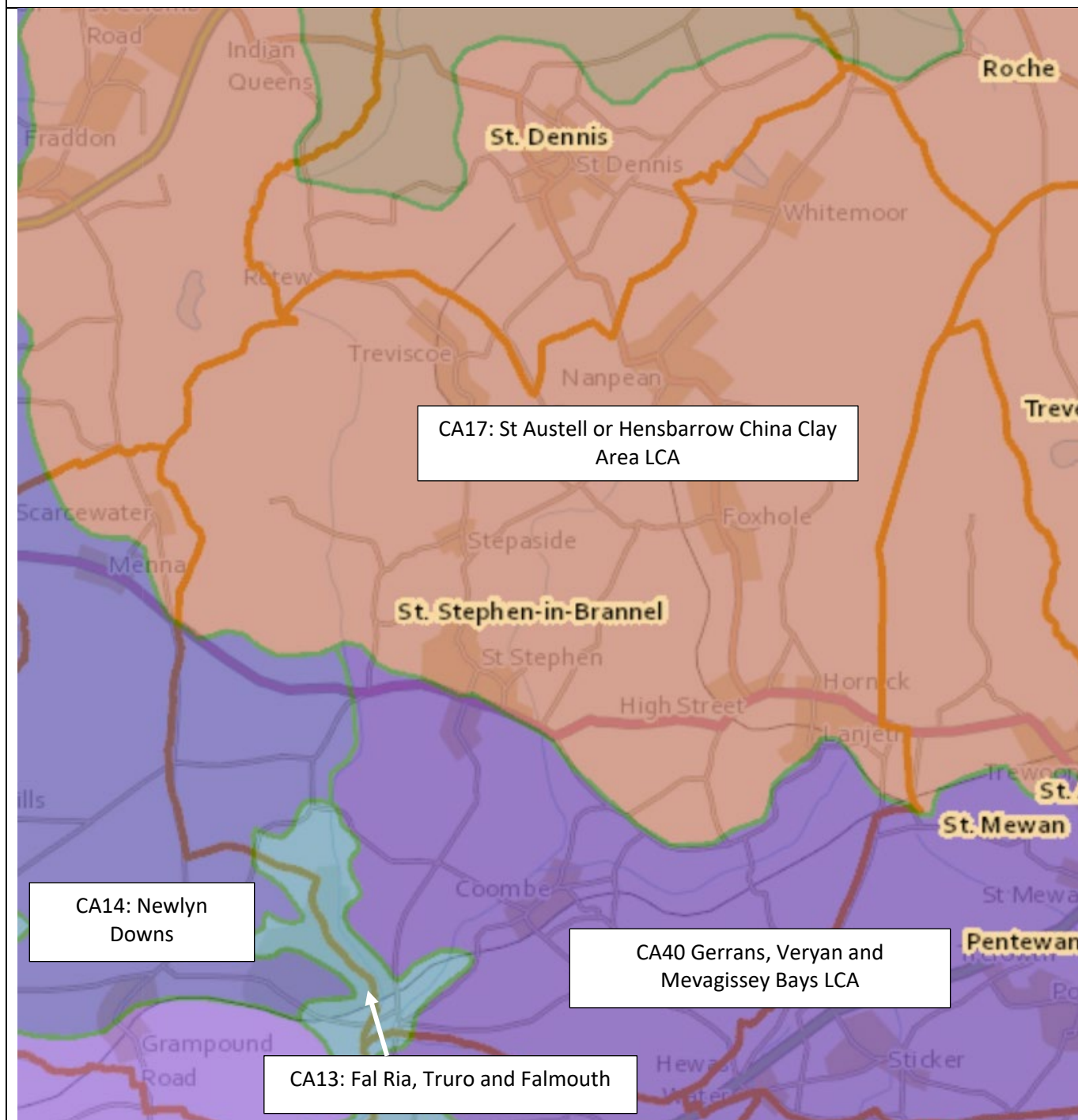
These are shown in Figure 4 following.

Each LCA is accompanied by a descriptive statement. The most important parts of these statements for the Carn Brea NDP Designated Area baseline are those covering the current condition of and pressures on the landscape. From these the following objectives and planning guidelines for each area can be drawn:

Area	Distinctive Features	Vision and Objectives	Planning Guidelines [applicable to that part of the LCA in the Parish]
CA13: Fal Ria, Truro and Falmouth	A small river valley that interlocks with the winding ria (drowned river valley) system of small creeks and river valleys that drain into the River Fal that broadens to form the Fal Estuary. It forms a steep valley cloaked in ancient and semi-natural broadleaved woodland. The field pattern is mainly small and irregular anciently enclosed land with larger and more regular fields indicating the more recent enclosure of rough ground and the removal in places of Cornish hedges.	The creeks appear to maintain their air of tranquillity, a sense that is equally found in the enclosed valleys of the upper sections of the rivers. The objective must be to maintain this natural beauty whilst accommodating development and increased recreational use. nb., This area is also in the River Fal AGLV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support measures to control the water environment and seek to influence the design of flood defences to ensure they are integrated with the landscape. • Develop design guidance for new development. • Support measures for woodland management, especially the oak woodland on the steep valley sides above the estuary, and seek to extend woodland where appropriate. • Seek to restrict development in the river valleys but develop a strategy to allow more recreational access • Conserve the tranquillity of undeveloped creeks along with the size and scale of Creekside settlements. • Conserve the character of farmsteads through the development and publication of design guidance for farm conversions.
CA14: Newlyn Downs	A wide rolling pastoral and arable character with Cornish hedges. Wind turbines form prominent elements.	This area has an intrinsic, quiet rural character where the landscape is generally uncluttered. The objective must be to encourage the conservation of the existing countryside while strictly controlling development which would clutter the landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance the existing landscape by encouraging the use of agri-environmental schemes. • Encourage woodland management, in particular the wet woodland in the valleys as well as further planting to extend the tree cover. • Develop a design guide to improve the relationship of the built areas with the open countryside and reduce visual intrusion
CA17: St Austell or Hensbarrow China Clay Area	A very varied, dramatic landscape of china clay waste tips and areas of rough vegetation, characterised by open pit mining. The mix of active and disused sites creates a dramatic 'lunar' landscape of huge, light- coloured waste tips and settling ponds within a relic pastoral farming landscape. A rugged area of great variation and drama. Dominant visual elements include the large white spoil heaps, either	This is a vibrant and dynamic industrial landscape of deep pits and steeply angled tips overlying an older farming and mining landscape, the remnants of which can be found amongst the present day workings. The objective must be to accommodate the needs of the China Clay Industry and local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of the China Clay Tipping and Restoration Strategy updating it where appropriate. • Ensure management plans are in operation for the care of restored land such as the heath and woodland. • Promote use of local building stone. • Prepare a strategy for controlling the spread of alien plant species, such as Rhododendron and Japanese Knotweed. • Identify and conserve important historic and ecological features while achieving balance with needs

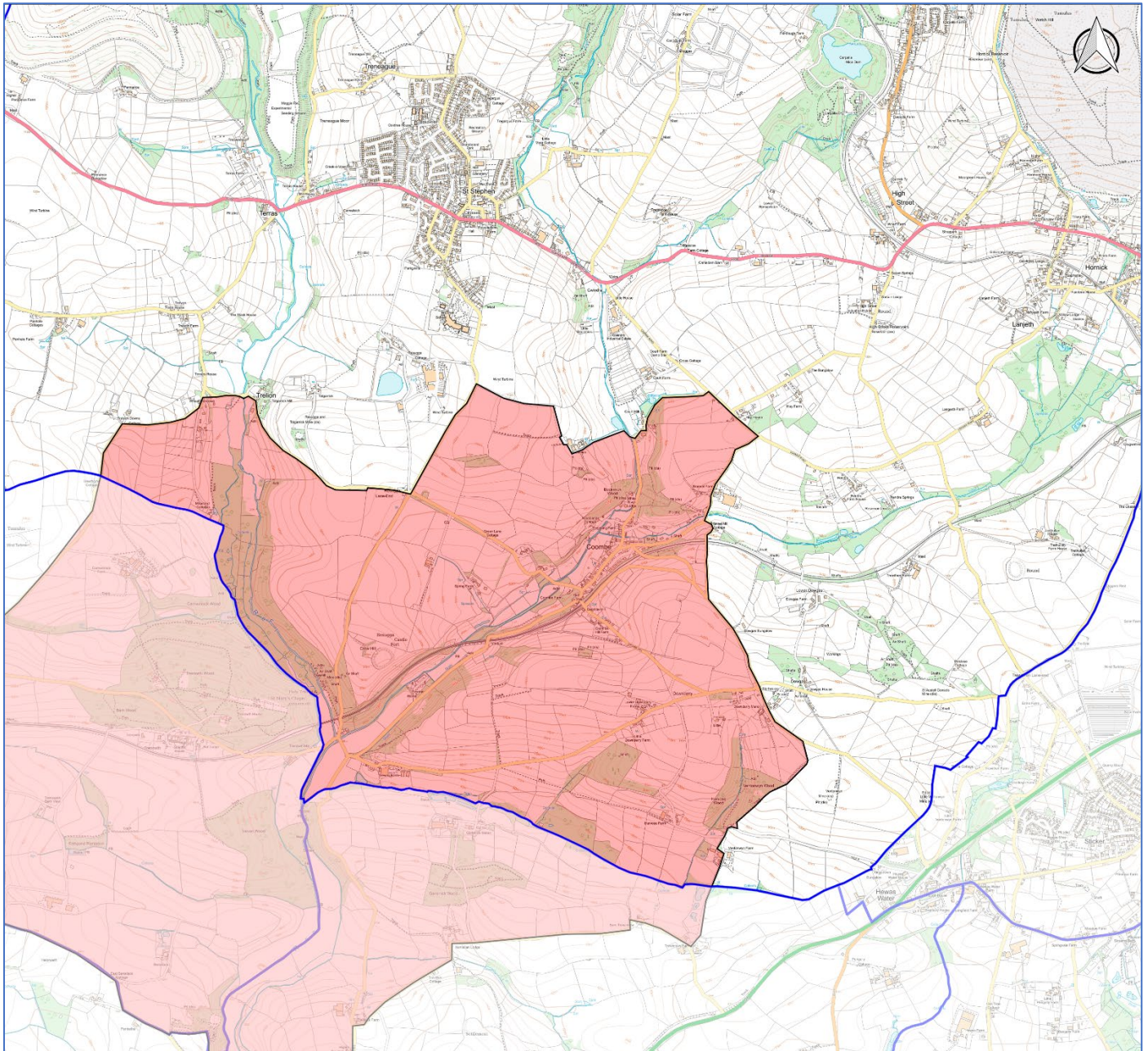
Area	Distinctive Features	Vision and Objectives	Planning Guidelines [applicable to that part of the LCA in the Parish]
	conical or flat-topped in form, aqua-blue pools, areas of rough ground and natural and naturally regenerated scrub and heath, as well as large quarry pits. The scale of these features contrasts dramatically with the small scale field patterns. The fluctuating and changing condition and relationship of elements in this landscape, and the natural regeneration of heathland, new woodland planting and rough ground provides a vivid and dynamic visual landscape character quite unlike surrounding LCAs	communities whilst restoring despoiled land in an appropriate manner so that the time depth of the landuse can be properly appreciated.	
CA40 Gerrans, Veryan and Mevagissey Bays	High farmland plateau bounded to the south by the sea, a farmed landscape, intersected by stream valleys which flow to the sea in the south and into the River Fal to the north west. a medieval landscape of largely anciently enclosed land with fields of small to medium size and irregular shape bounded in most places by slate Cornish hedges. Settlement is sparsely distributed across the area which is dotted with small farmsteads and medieval farm hamlets. Coombe developed due to its links with the mining industry. In the northern section of this area the distant china clay tips and the industry related to Charlestown and St Austell Bay have a significant visual influence on the landscape,	A tranquil and peaceful, rural landscape which still has a sense of its roots in farming, fishing and mining. Although this area is under pressure from a number of different forces this area has still managed to largely retain its working, domesticated character. The objective for this area should be to manage these forces for change in a way which maintains the tranquillity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance wooded area by providing guidance on appropriate woodland management to ensure mixed age structure. • Maintain stream valleys wetland and woodland habitats Provide guidance for change of use to equine activities that stress the need to retain field boundaries and advise on appropriate stabling style and scale. • Restrict development to existing settlements, plan for affordable housing exceptions sites that maintain the character of settlements via careful siting and the use of exemplar design that reflects the local vernacular. • Enhance local distinctiveness through programme of restoration and maintenance of metal fingerposts

Figure 4: Landscape Character Areas



Using this material and with reference to the detailed analysis of the Landscape Character Units within the Parish given in the Cornwall Renewable Energy Planning Advice Annex 1, Appendix 1 Landscape Sensitivity and Strategy Matrices, an area of search for wind turbine development has been defined. See:

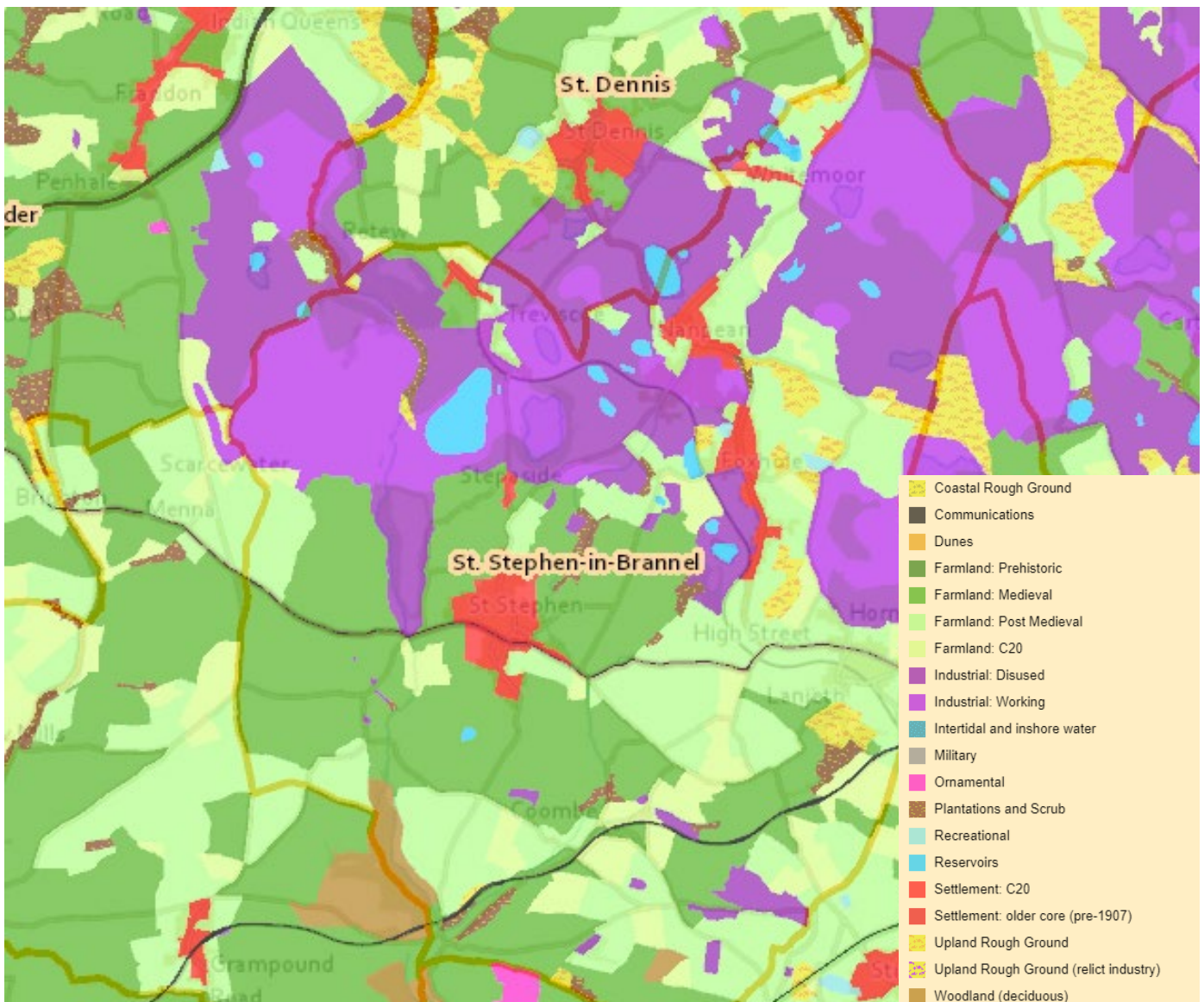
https://ststepheninbrannelparishfuture.co.uk/?page_id=281



[Sources: CC Interactive Mapping]

Historic Landscape Characterisation

Cornwall has been divided up into 40 areas which share similar landscape characteristics. These areas represent the next scale down from the large national areas and give us an overview of how landscapes change across the county. The character areas have been constructed by amalgamating Landscape Description Units with shared characteristics. In St Stephen in Brannel Parish much of the landscape comes under the category of 'industrial working' ie china clay extraction, which due to its large-scale surface mining character has destroyed the underlying landscape and heritage, but arguably creating a historic landscape character of its on.



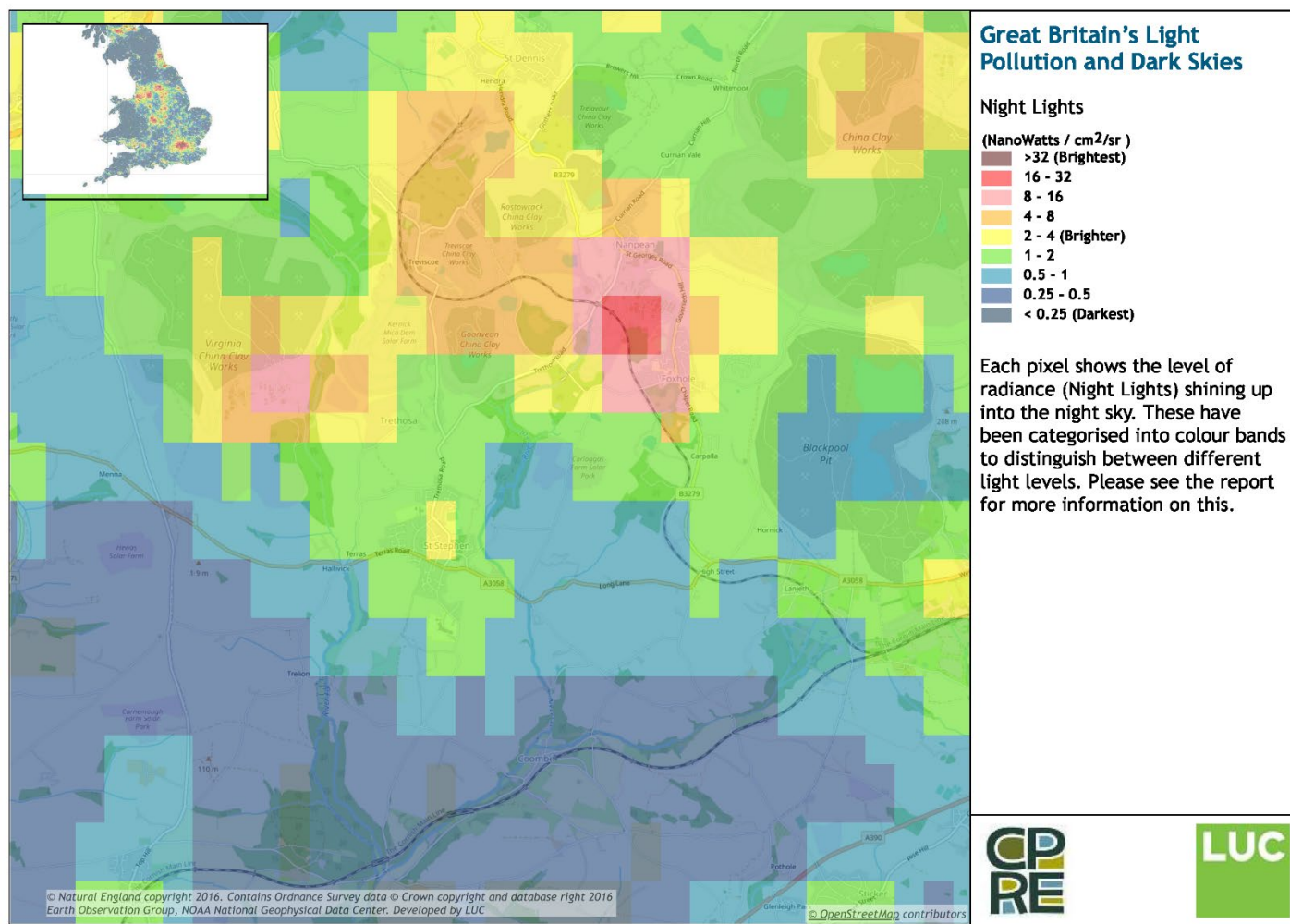
Dark Skies

The dark night-time sky in itself a natural asset which is enjoyed by the community of this area of the Parish as part of the experience of living in the area. It can bring enjoyment and appreciation, improve quality of life and provide creative inspiration, help promote improved sleep patterns and reduce stress, and provide a more natural environment for both nocturnal and diurnal animals. In some locations night-time darkness is also an essential part of the historic character.

The south of the Parish of St Stephen in Brannel is fortunate in that it has areas that are unaffected by artificial light. To the north the floodlighting of china clay workings and plant casts an eerie glow when viewed from afar above the dark mass of waste tips, but nevertheless there are areas of complete darkness. Light spillage from these areas, with the lights from the nearby clay workings and villages causing a sky glow to the north, and a significant light ‘bloom’ on misty nights, detracts from these benefits. On the other hand, because of the topography of the Parish, there are locations in the centre and south of the Parish which enjoy a pleasing night-time landscape panorama, for example with long views south over the rural plateau. And of course, adequate lighting is essential for personal and road safety, and for crime prevention.

However, all of these aspects may be affected by poorly designed street, security and advertising lighting which is overly bright, needlessly spills upwards, or is poorly aimed and creates glare or shadows, causing harm to the night sky or night-time landscape, and making it harder to see safely as well as being wasteful of energy. There is growing evidence that shows that light pollution affects most organisms by changing their food gathering and feeding habits, their mating and reproduction, as well as migration and social behaviour. Unnatural light endangers animals whose life cycles depend on darkness.

CPRE has produced a 'Night Blight' map which shows the affected areas., see Figure X following.



[Sources: CPRE NightBlight mapping at <https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk>]

Restoration of China Clay Working Areas

The landscape of the northern part of the Parish has been significantly impacted by china clay workings for more than 200 years. The reuse of tips and pits is therefore an important consideration that must be reflected in the NDP.

The management of restoration and tipping is a matter for Cornwall Council as the Mineral Planning Authority, though the recently adopted **China Clay Restoration and Tipping Strategy SPD**. [[St Austell China Clay Restoration and Tipping Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\) - Cornwall Council](#)] Significant changes in the china clay industry since 2000, including substantial reduction in the annual production of china clay, new opportunities for environmental and landscape improvements and Government funded initiatives to promote woodland and heathland habitats are creating new opportunities that the SPD addresses. Indeed the Government funded initiatives, together with the pro-active approach to restoration and revegetation taken by the industry, has resulted in a significant change in the landscape of the St Austell china clay district in the last two decades. Therefore the TRS was reviewed in 2021 to:

- assess the condition of the land (in terms of restoration), within each of the operational areas;
- assess how effective restoration has been, taking account available techniques and provide guidance on applicable techniques and management planning;
- consider restoration techniques suitable for future areas of restoration;
- provide guidance on appropriate restoration techniques and aftercare management; and
- consider potential opportunities for diversion of public rights of way.

Possible New Uses for Tips and Operational Areas. Recent new uses for tips have included a wide range of land-uses, for example being returned to productive agricultural land, landscaped areas, and renewable energy development, including solar farms on restored mica lagoons.

Much of the drive behind restoration is likely to be restoration to a 'natural' state. Generally speaking, most restoration has been and will continue to be through native broadleaf woodland planting at the base and lower slopes to tips, with hydroseeding of acid grassland on higher slopes (upper benches) and heathland habitat on the surface of the tip, to recreate a 'natural' environment. This has produced notable areas of green space around the 'island settlement' villages. In some locations the transition between existing and restored landscapes is somewhat abrupt, and in future projects a more gentle transition may be designed.

The new SPD says there may be options to diversify reuse of more tips (and pits) for future energy related development. The St Stephen in Brannel NDP recognises this and identifies 'Areas of Search' for wind energy development.

Reuse of material from tips as a supply of secondary aggregate is also an option on many of the tips which could result in short-term impacts associated with secondary mineral extraction, together with revised landform, as the height and scale of tips are reduced. In the longer term such sites would likely be further restored within the landscape.

Housing development is also a possibility, for example the West Carclaze garden village that is located within former operational land and is of a scale and location to be considered a sustainable development. In St Stephen in Brannel parish no opportunities of this scale are likely to be possible given landscape, heritage, access and service provision constraints, but there may be opportunities for smaller scale developments, particularly where they offer 'rural exception' affordable housing.

There is significant potential to reuse former china clay pits and tips for leisure-based projects, such as the network of permissive paths to increase access for leisure and recreation. Potentially, future options include leisure uses that combine open water within worked out pits with restoration of tips to promote 'green tourism' holiday and recreational uses.

As noted elsewhere in this report, and in the Historic Environment Report, the heritage of the china clay industry and its landscape impact is of significant value to local residents sense of place and history. It also determined the form and character of the 'island settlements'. There is desire to respect and celebrate this heritage and restoration of china clay tips and pits needs to respond to this by retaining a visual history of the industry in the landscape, possibly by selective retention of a range of tip profiles. The SPD advises that future restoration schemes should consider four main aspects of the historic environment that should be reflected in landscaping works, including:

- the significance of certain areas and aspects of the pre-china-clay landscape (prehistoric to modern);
- the significance of the heritage of the China Clay industry itself;
- the way the landscape of the China Clay Area is perceived by people in relation to the area's identity and sense of place; and
- the importance of local cultural distinctiveness to people's appreciation and enjoyment of places within the China Clay Area.

Landscape Character by Settlement

St Stephen - St Stephen sits on relatively flat ground on a ridge between the two branches of the upper Fal to the east and west, set amongst medieval farmland. Generally small-scale fields with curving lines (lanes, field boundaries, etc). Often numerous hedgerow trees along the narrow lanes that emanate from the settlement. None of the surrounding landscape is designated as being of any special quality, but about 1km to the south is an Area of Great Landscape Value, whilst to the north about the same distance is the china clay district. It is the latter which serves as a backdrop to the village as it is approached from the west, and is visible in vistas from several locations within the settlement. The historic landscape of the St Stephens 'Churchtown' is important and should be conserved.

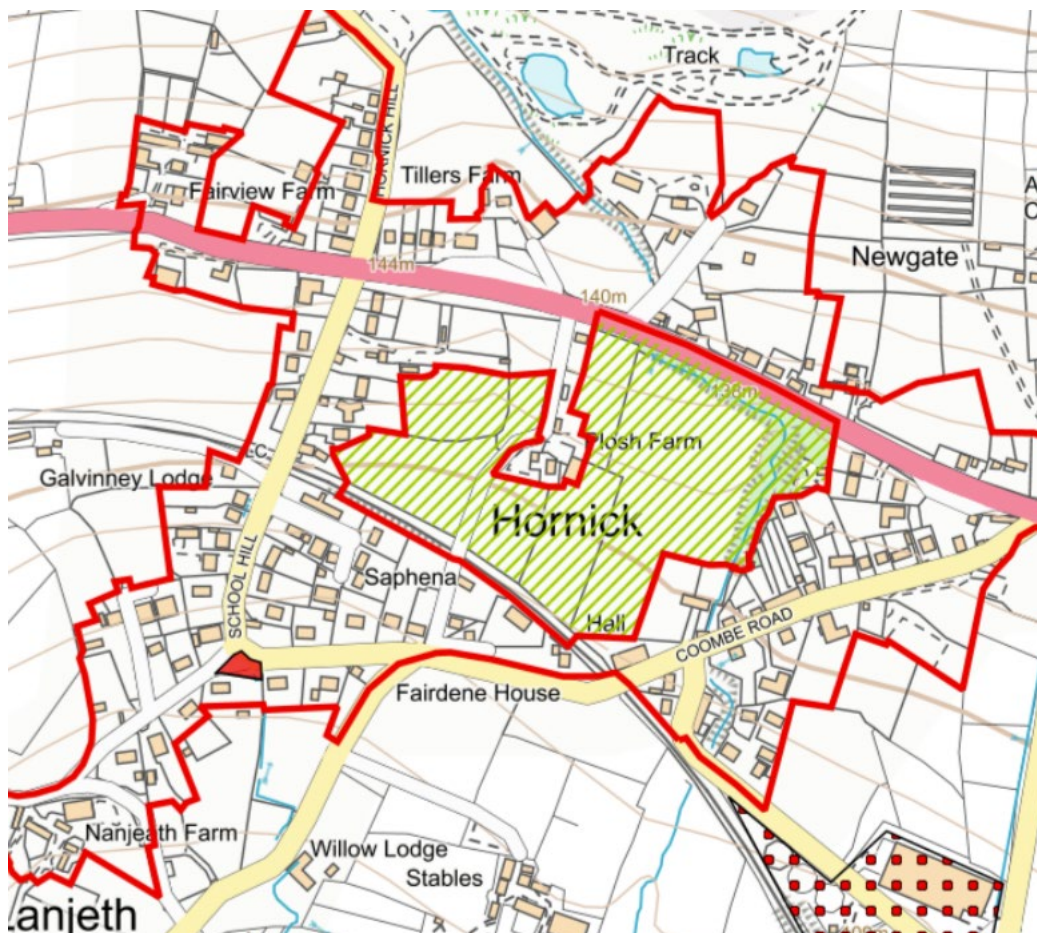
Coombe - The entire village is within the Area of Great Landscape Value. The Gwindra Stream provides an intimate and tranquil character, including an area of pleasant water meadow in the form of two flattish agricultural fields. Hedgerows alongside stream and other boundaries, although very patchy to the residential boundaries on the south. To the north is beyond an area of relatively modern plantation is medieval farmland with its typical irregular small

fields and hedgerows. On the north east are old quarry diggings, now much wooded, whilst to the south, beyond the railway line, the land is an undulating a mix of modern and post-medieval enclosed farmland with some vestigial medieval farmland. Fields are more regular and hedgerows more sparse. The land alongside the stream has been used by the village recreationally and is suggested as a Local Green Space in the Local Green Spaces assessment.

High Street - This area is an area of mostly post-medieval enclosed farmland, with irregular field shapes, hedgerows, and some prominent individual trees that stand out.

Lanjeth - is located in an area of formally rough ground and probable medieval commons enclosed in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, along with some relic medieval farmland. It is characterised by many small fields in a regular layout. The village originates from two tiny medieval settlements, Lanjeth and Hornick, which it appears after the enclosures to have been supplemented by some post medieval features such as blacksmith and carpenter's workshops, and a scatter of workers dwellings along the road from St Austell to St Stephen. Still by the end of the 19th century the village did not exist, but in more modern times the field pattern lent itself to plotland development, growing along the road south towards the nearby Lanjeth Mine, which over time has been infilled to form the modern and unusual settlement of Lanjeth, being formed of two linear arms of development, now divided into three portions by the main A3058 and the mineral railway line both running east-west.

This area has interest as a mix of medieval and post medieval farmland [probable medieval commons enclosed in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries], the area of a post-medieval iron mine [Nanzeath], and an extensive area of upland rough ground, possibly quite ancient. The village originates from two tiny medieval settlements., Lanjeth and Hornick, which it appears after the enclosures to have been supplemented by some post medieval features such as blacksmith and carpenter's workshops, and a scatter of workers dwellings along the road from St Austell to St



Stephen. Many of the fields are very small and irregular, probably plots associated with the original medieval settlement. Today in more modern times the field pattern lent itself to plotland development, growing along the road south towards the nearby Lanjeth Mine, which over time has been infilled to form the modern and unusual settlement of Lanjeth, being formed of two linear arms of development, now divided into three portions by the main A3058 and the mineral railway line both running east-west, with the hedgerows now forming garden boundaries

Enclosed within the village, at its centre, is 'Plosh Farm' and its fields. This land is open, green and of wildlife

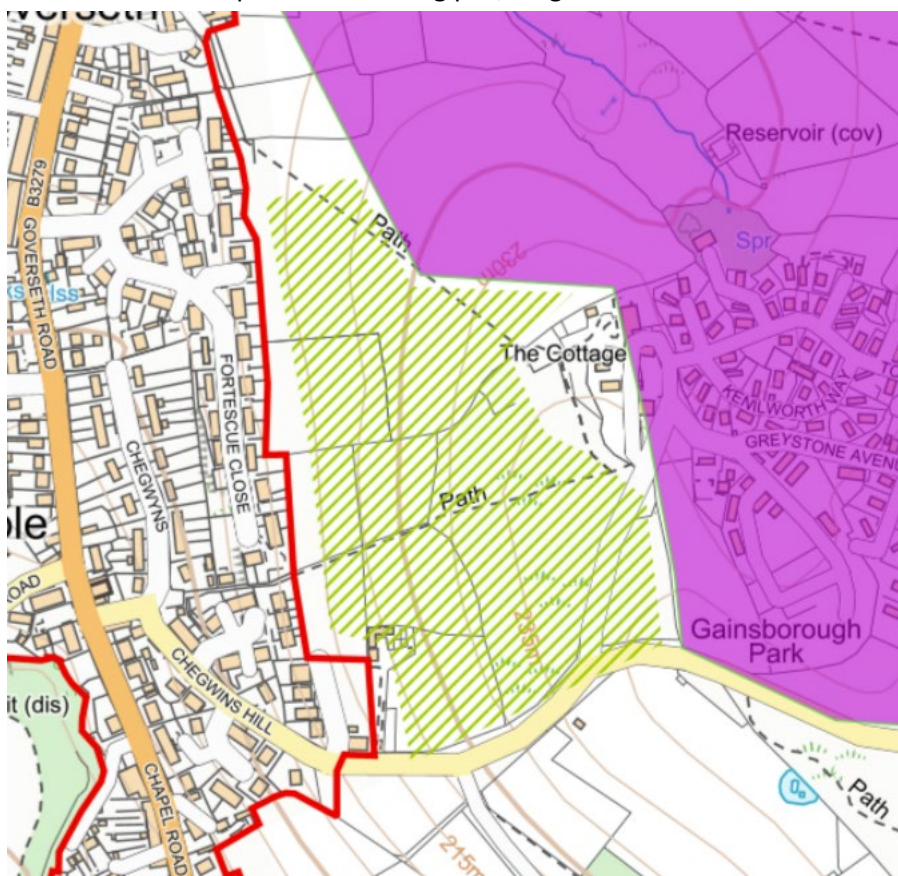
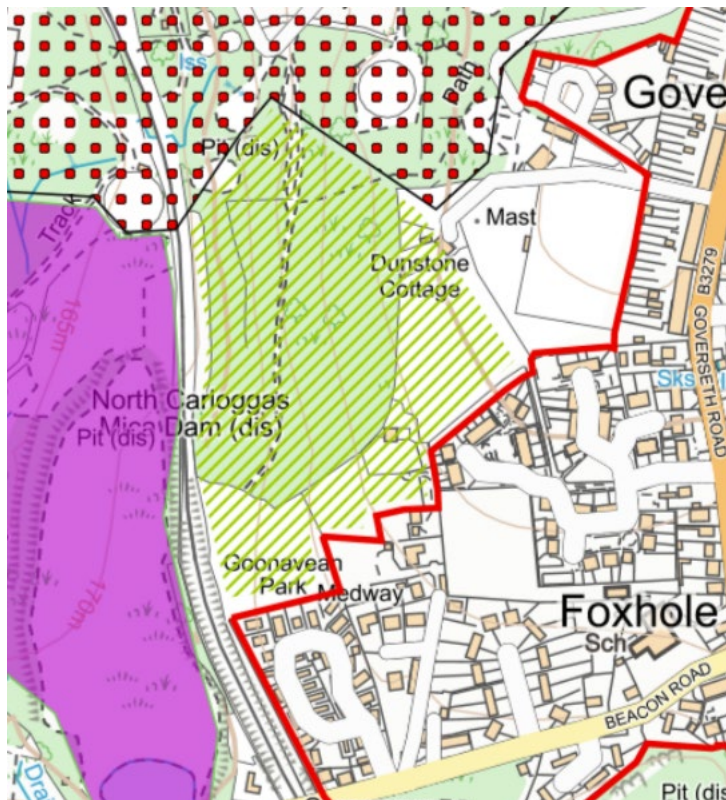
value. Ecological studies on adjoining land suggest that badgers, hedgehog, reptiles, breeding birds, dormouse and bats may be present in the habitat provided by the trees, hedgerows and grasslands present. They are also known to be quite wet, and is partly subject to surface water flooding. It contributes significantly to the rural character of Lanjeth as perceived by residents and those passing through via the A3058. Being at the centre of the village it has already attracted development pressures, and if it were developed entirely the settlement would become much more suburbanised. Therefore it is proposed that the area be identified as being outside the development boundary as an 'Open Area of Local Significance [OALS]'.

Treviscoe - Of all the Clay villages, Treviscoe is notable for having some hedgerows and 'normal' countryside, particularly to its west, and although none of the surrounding landscape is designated as being of any special quality, the village enjoys an interesting backdrop, with vistas to be had of the higher ground to the south west and east, all of which is much altered by china clay working, but which nevertheless is an everyday reminder that the village is set in amongst an important and historic industrial landscape.

Foxhole - The landscape setting is dominated by the heights of Watch Hill to the east and the former farming and moorland now mainly given over to the china clay industry. The panorama within which the village sits, contained by

industrial landscapes in the country, is dramatic, interesting and attractive in some places. None of this landscape is designated as being of county or national importance, although it has great local significance in terms of its relationship with the evolution of the china clay industry, the local urban 'island settlement' form, and the daily experience of living in a distinctly unusual but well recognised Cornish landscape. It also has important literary links, to the works of Jack Clemo, A L Rowse and Alan Kent. For Clemo in particular the china clay landscape had symbolic importance for his mystical and religious experiences, and his words capture how the expanding clay industry impacted on nature, which, after abandonment of the works, were reclaimed by nature. Indeed the landscape between the workings and around the village is surprisingly green – overgrown rather than planted – full of bushes and trees and small green fields. The views to the west and south are far reaching. The immediate foreground is over the shallow valley to St Stephen's Beacon. In this valley and beyond to the north are both working china clay pits [Goverseth and Treviscoe], with aquamarine pools and settling pits, long-abandoned hollows and

conical dumps now covered in scrub and low trees. The more distant view is over the broad vale of St Stephen-in-Brannel - and to the south down to the sea between Mevagissey Bay and Vryan Bay. To the north and west views are contained by the higher ground and the china clay waste dumps on Watch Hill, although ancient agricultural lands and fields are still discernible in the Goverseth valley and immediately to the east of the village. The streetscape is of long rows of terraces and individual villas, interspersed with modern infill along the long central road. It is mainly quite broad, creating vistas along its length; and linking the different character areas within the village. The chapel, school and 'cost-cutter' give the only 'centre' and sense of place to the village. To the immediate north and south of Foxhole the abrupt curves, narrower road, sense of enclosure and presence of large trees and good



architecture in Carpalla (especially at Higher Carpalla) create shorter, but more enticing views along the road, and the wider views are more likely to be glimpses through buildings or across the occasional open plot than the broad panoramas elsewhere.

Beyond the village a short way to the east, is an area identified in the Minerals Safeguarding DPD as an 'Area Believed to Contain China Clay Reserves'. Planning applications for residential development in depth have been refused in the past for land to the east of Fortescue Close, projecting up into the land above the village where it would dominate and approach the minerals reserve area, and off Chegwyns Hill. This area is important to the setting and character of the settlement and forms a clear gap, or green wedge, between it and the future minerals area and Gainsborough park home development, in recognition of which it is proposed that it be designated as an Open Area of Local Significance.

To the north west of the settlement is an area of rough ground bounded by the railway line to the west and the Goverseth Works to the north, that was formerly part of the North Carloggas China Clay Works, now outside of the minerals safeguarded deposits and development reserves. This area makes a contribution to the landscape setting of the village, and also to its historic form. It also serves as a clear gap, or green wedge, between the works and the village. In recognition of which it is proposed that it be designated as an Open Area of Local Significance.

<p>Jack Clemo: The Flooded Clay-Pit</p> <p>These white crags Cup waves that rub more greedily Now half-way up the chasm; you see Doomed foliage hang like rags;</p> <p>The whole clay-belly sags.</p> <p>What scenes far Beneath those waters: chimney-pots That used to smoke; brown rusty clots Of wheels still oozing tar; Lodge doors that rot ajar.</p> <p>Those iron rails Emerge like claws cut short on the dump, Though once they bore the waggon's thump: Now only toads and snails Creep round their loosened nails.</p> <p>Those thin tips Of massive pit-bed pillars – how They strain to scab the pool's face now, Pressing like famished lips Which dread the cold eclipse.</p>	<p>Alan Kent: War Zone</p> <p>Bees skim past. Low level insect Tornadoes, strifing cowardling Foxgloves, then leaving delicate dribbles of nectar, left upon cracked granite. A War zone already.</p> <p>The clay advances but nature counter-attacks. Spores lined up as artillery. Seeds like Air-to-Ground missiles. Rabbits droppings, - tiny cannon balls, and every bramble thorn, a platoon hero.</p> <p>On slopes, lone sniper plants aim for targets, often wiped out in legions though by the jaws of earth-movers, steel-solid and sand's ally. Blink twice and no longer they grow.</p> <p>Return in ten years time; See lines of stone cemeteries, Graves to unknown soldiers, tips marking spots of great campaigns. The Clay never had a hope see. Isoceles edges once white, now green, have signed a long-term peace treaty.</p>	<p>Alan Kent: Clay Euphemisms</p> <p>The tips are not "White pyramids" or "Cornish Alps". They are sad words, thrown at tourists to make us feel good, to hide those scars and wounds, to give the industry a plastic surgery. But there is no need. There is beauty here enough without a pointless cover-up.</p> <p>Walk along mica splattered lanes where tall foxgloves poke purple through a white crust. Drive through a saffron sunset where ivory tips are dizzy orange lit.</p> <p>Do not ever bend your words to fit. Take the colours straight, whisky without water is it.</p> <p>The tips still grow, and conjuring with the image, your soul becomes poor. The truth is the Clayland needs no deep-mined metaphor.</p>
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Nanpean - The old core of Nanpean is on the sloping sides of the small valley that gives it its name, with a notable height difference between the upper streets (Currian Road/Hallew Road) and the lower (St George's Road). Thus there are good views and vistas which contribute to the village's character, with glimpses and views out from the upper roads across the dramatic landscape visible from even the most enclosed streetscapes along Currian Road, which is itself dramatically closed at either end by views of clay tips. The visual relationship between these areas turns at the centre of the village, emphasising its sense of place. The streetscape is varied, with Fore Street climbing

up towards Currian Road via the sinuous road, with good views of the key buildings of character and importance in the village. Unfortunately the engineering of the road as a through route and a lack of care for the design and maintenance of the public realm rather dominates, so that they form a barrier to pedestrian users and detracts from its attractiveness. On the other hand the small area around the junction with Hallow Road has some good design which brings out its historic character and makes good use of the Obelisk as feature, set against the background of interesting buildings and the trees above Victoria Bottoms. Above this along Currian Road the vista is long and straight, characterised by strong grey garden wall leading away up the hill, although some of these have been removed and hard-standings formed for parking. This is an area typified by mid 20th Century bungalows, many of which are pleasant and of a period, but there are some of more modern designs that jar. Beyond that Currian Road is bounded on both side by the company housing, distinctive in the repetitive rhythm of their design and imparting a strong linear character. Moving to the south of the village, St George's Road sweeps around beyond Fore Street to reveal the Drinnicks works, which have the immediate impact of reminding us that here we are in Clay Country, an area of industry that has determined the shape, form and style of the landscape and buildings within it.

Whitemoor - is notable for the impact that china clay mining, the village sitting amongst extensive operational and abandoned workings in a hugely altered landscape. This in itself has a strange attraction, emphasised by fact that the village straddles the northern and southern watersheds and has a distinct remote atmosphere of its own.

Summary of Key Distinguishing Characteristics of the St Stephen in Brannel Parish Landscape

The northern part of the Parish is specifically not recognised in any Planning designations for its scenic quality, as it is considered to be a large scale industrial landscape with significant human influence. However the presence of the prominent and distinctive huge and pale 'benched' spoil heaps, the aqua-blue pools, intriguing industrial structures and the presence of historic skyline features give this landscape a value all of its own. It presents the 'face' of China Clay in Cornwall to many visitors, and is familiar to local people adding to their enjoyment of the area as their 'place', contributing to their sense of distinctiveness, and even the sense of belonging to a particular village and community. In this sense, familiar landscapes and views, no matter how changed by human influence, are locally cherished. They are the setting for people's everyday existence within their community and family life, valued as the place where their life experiences occur. This is a 'sense of place' or an 'attachment to the ordinary landscape'. These can affect psychological and social well-being and are part of the sustainable development concept. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF [2021] requires planning decisions to contribute to 'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.' Further, policy 23 of the Cornwall Local Plan explains through paragraph 2.146 that '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.'

The landscape also has value to the setting and significance of heritage assets which may depend in part on their legibility in views towards and away from them. Similarly, the landscape itself can be the reason for the existence of a heritage asset, for example St Stephens Beacon, not only a prehistoric hillfort because of the defensive qualities of its elevated position, but also as the place where Cookworthy first discovered the China Clay deposits which radically changed the local economy and environment and the art of mass ceramic production.

The dramatic panorama of this northern landscape It also has important literary links, to the works of Jack Clemo, A L Rowse and Alan Kent. For Clemo in particular the china clay landscape had symbolic importance for his mystical and religious experiences, and his words capture how the expanding clay industry impacted on nature, which, after abandonment of the works, were reclaimed by nature.

The southern half of the parish, off the granite, is much more of an agricultural heartland and traditionally 'Cornish' in character, with a scatter of small villages and Hamlets around the parish Churchtown of St Stephens, set amongst medieval field patterns and the upper reaches of the River Fal, with a scattering of deep mining structures around Coombe. Much of this is an Area of Great Landscape Value.

Related Community Engagement Feedback

When asked what three things people most liked about the Parish, they rated the highest as the rural nature and countryside. There was also some strength of feeling that any new development should be sympathetic to existing local architectural character and that our local China Clay traditions, character and events should be upheld and protected.

Key issues and implications for the NDP

In the light of the preceding data, the following provisions should be reflected in the Neighbourhood Development Plan:

Proposed NDP Objectives

- Reduce the environmental impact of development, protect and increase biodiversity and protect wildlife corridors.
- Protect and enhance the landscape character and setting for the Parish.
- Supporting the best productive and positive use of previously developed, despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land.
- Ensure that development is appropriate in scale and character to its setting, reflects each village's distinctive character and respects or enhances their settings.
- Protect the Parish's heritage assets, ensuring evidence of the Parish's significant historical contribution in the South West is upheld.

Development Boundaries

- Ensure that heritage and landscape factors are assessed in defining Development Boundaries

Policies

- Include criteria in development boundary and infill policies that ensures that new development layouts, design solutions, densities, scale and massing etc. respond to and are informed by the historic and landscape character of site and its wider context.
- Ask that new development demonstrates that it has considered
 - the significance of the heritage of the China Clay industry itself;
 - the way the landscape of the China Clay Area is perceived by people in relation to the area's identity and sense of place; and
 - the importance of local cultural distinctiveness to people's appreciation and enjoyment of places within the China Clay Area.
- Include a policy designating Open Areas of Local Significance at Foxhole and Lanjeth and policy criteria for the integration of development into the area.
- Include policy criteria identifying the most critical aspects of the local landscape that development should respect and enhance.
- Include policy criteria encouraging design inspiration to be drawn from local sources and thereby fit well within existing landscape and topography in character and form of the landscape.
- Including a policy to protect and enhance the rural 'dark sky'.