

Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative
Portreath
(Camborne/Redruth Area)



March 2002

CORNWALL INDUSTRIAL SETTLEMENTS INITIATIVE

Conservation Area Partnership

Name:	Portreath	Study Area:	Camborne-Redruth
Council:	Kerrier District Council	NGR:	SW 65 45
Location:	North coast of mid-west Cornwall, three miles north of Camborne.	Existing CA?	No
Main period of industrial settlement growth:	18 th century – 1910	Main industry:	Port associated with mining

Industrial history and significance

Portreath was above all a mineral harbour. Its industrial significance is thus bound up with this link to the local copper mines, at first around Scorrier, and later Camborne. As part of the earliest phase of the development of railways, and the parallel development of railways and port development, and through its connections with some of the great Cornish industrialists (the Basset, Fox, and Williams families), Portreath occupies a key place in Cornish industrial history. It also played a role in providing a holiday base for the working populations of the Camborne-Redruth mining districts in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

This settlement will either form part of the proposed Cornish Mining World Heritage Site Bid, or will be considered an important part of the context for the Bid.

Recommendations

Historic areas

- Proposed new conservation area
- Survey of archaeological potential

Historic buildings

- Re-assessment of Statutory List
- Article 4 Directions to control hard standing and loss of boundaries

Policy and management

- Future developments to the historic grain and development pattern in and around the village
- Restriction of development outside the existing built-up area, particularly in the open hillsides to the north and south of Portreath
- Development or redevelopment of the small commercial area in the centre of Portreath to be actively encouraged
- Incremental improvement and improved access to the quays which respect the historic fabric or character to improve its use as a working harbour
- Management schemes, development briefs and conservation plans for some of the most sensitive historic buildings and areas
- Enhancement schemes for many of the important spaces in the town, especially at The Square, Railway Terrace, and the sea front
- Future road improvements and/or provision of street lighting and furniture to respect the historical building line and reflect differences in the local townscape
- Existing town trails and guides and other promotional initiatives to be integrated further and promoted as a single package, and partnerships developed with bodies like the National Trust, Mineral Tramways Project
- Consider establishing an independent visitor centre
- Further studies to cover adjoining areas outside the existing CISI programme, especially the area of mine remains and the recreational buildings associated with the Bassets to the west of Portreath

Conservation Area Partnership

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The Cahill Partnership
and
Cornwall Archaeological Unit

March 2002

Acknowledgements

This report presents the results of an assessment carried out by Nick Cahill for The Cahill Partnership following desktop research by Cornwall Archaeological Unit (Bryn Perry Tapper). Assistance was also provided by Andrew Richards, Kerrier District Council. The report text was prepared by Nick Cahill with assistance from Mary Cahill and edited by Jeanette Ratcliffe (CAU Senior Archaeologist and CISI Project Manager). The report maps were produced by John Brinkhoff (CCC Planning Directorate Technical Services Section) from roughs prepared by Nick Cahill.

Front cover illustration

Portreath from the north-west looking over the harbour and Incline

(CAU APR 2288/4/34 F10/151/655 455)

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Abbreviations in main text

AGHV	Area of Great Historic Value
AGSV	Area of Great Scientific Value
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CA	Conservation Area
CAU	Cornwall Archaeological Unit
CCC	Cornwall County Council
CISI	Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative
GPDO	General Permitted Development Order
HES	Historic Environment Section, Cornwall County Council

HERS	Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (English Heritage)
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund (ing)
LB	Listed Building
OALS	Open Areas of Local Significance to Settlement Character
OS	Ordnance Survey
PD	Permitted Development
SPG	Supplementary Planning Guidance
THI	Townscape Heritage Initiative (Heritage Lottery Fund)
[1]	Site number on Figure 4 and in the gazetteer (Appendix 2)

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Cornwall's industrial settlements are the subject of a Conservation Area Partnership under the heading Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative (CISI). This partnership between English Heritage (with the Heritage Lottery Fund), Cornwall County Council, and the District Councils is intended to assess the character and significance of the County's 112 industrial settlements. These include villages, ports and towns associated with Cornwall's 19th century industrial revolution, based on metalliferous mining, slate and granite quarrying, and china clay extraction. The historic importance and distinctive character of such settlements has previously been undervalued, and their existing status does not adequately represent the industrial history of the county. CISI is aimed at redressing this imbalance.

1.2 Project aims

The aim of CISI is to produce a settlement by settlement analysis in order to obtain an overview of the history, present character and importance of Cornwall's industrial settlements. This will help determine where, for example, new Conservation Areas should be designated (and existing ones revised), and could provide the basis for Conservation Area Statements (to be drawn up subsequently by District Conservation Officers).

A bid is being prepared for submission to UNESCO by February 2004 (for inscription in June 2005). The bid areas will include the full range of 18th-20th century mining landscape components, including the settlements that were created or rapidly expanded as a result of mining and its associated industries. All mining settlements are of significance to the World Heritage Site Bid – those that fall within the final Bid areas will be covered by the WHS Management Plan, while those that fall outside these areas will form part of the context for the World Heritage Site and will need to be sensitively managed in the light of this.

1.3 Project methodology

The methodology involved historical research, followed by a site visit(s). For the historical research, a date range of 1750 to 1945 was chosen, as this represented the period of industrial growth and decline in Cornwall. Archaeological and historical sources housed at CCC (see Section 11.1) were consulted, together with Listed Building data supplied by the District Councils. Using this information, Ordnance Survey base maps were hand coloured to show: the different phases of historical development; surviving historic components from each development phase; archaeological sites, key historic buildings, and statutory designations. These maps (which formed the basis for Figures 2-4), together with copies of the primary sources consulted, were bound into a folder for each settlement, for use during site visits.

The focus of the site visits was to assess settlement character and consider ways in which this could be protected and enhanced in the future. This was achieved using a checklist drawn from *Conservation Area Practice: English Heritage's guidance on the management of Conservation Areas* (1995) and *Conservation Area Management - A Practical Guide* (published by the English Towns Forum, 1998). The maps compiled during the historical phase were enhanced during the site visits, particularly with information relating to the survival and significance of historic buildings, and a general photographic record (colour prints) was made of each settlement. Meetings on site were arranged with the District Conservation Officers in order to discuss current initiatives and recommendations for future management.

1.4 Date of Assessment

Portreath was assessed as part of CISI during November 2000

2 Location and setting

2.1 Geographical location

Portreath is located on the north Cornish coast approximately three miles to the north of Camborne and a mile north of Illogan Churchtown. It is a parish within Kerrier District; see Figure 1.

2.2 Landscape setting

Portreath lies at the point where the Red River Valley meets the sea, forming a relatively broad, sandy cove (for this stretch of coastline); a second, smaller stream and valley enters the main cove from the west. The setting is inevitably dominated by the sea to the north, with an expanse of sandy beach to the west of the village and cliffs rising on either side of the valley. The Red River Valley, which is narrow and steep sided to the east of Portreath, opens out to be relatively broad and flat bottomed at this point, the wooded inland hills providing a contrast to the wild seaward landscape.

3 Summary historical development (fig 2)

This section should be read in conjunction with Figure 2, and summarises the more detailed analysis (Appendix 1), to which reference should be made for further information.

3.1 Pre- 1809

3.1.1 Economic activity

- Tin streaming is recorded in Portreath valley in 1602, with a stamping mill by the late 18th century at Glenfeadon. In 1713 a quay was built near Amy's Point. Although never an important mining centre there were small-scale mining in the area, and mines to the west (North Cliffs) and east (Porthtowan) may have been served by the small harbour.
- A new harbour was laid out from 1760 (enlarged 1800) with associated sheds and stores, particularly on the south side of the basin. It was ideally placed to import coal from and export ore to the coalfields and copper smelters of South Wales and service the expanding tin and copper mines around Redruth and Gwennap; it also had an active fishing fleet - the large courtyard of the pilchard palace (fish cellars) was built in 1803.
- The horse-drawn Poldice Plateway was begun 1809; by 1819 it had been extended its full length to Crofthandy (south of Scorrier).

3.1.2 Extent of settlement

- First recorded as a place name in 1485 (meaning sandy cove or beach).
- A series of small rows (Harbour Terrace and Tregea Terrace, and the now-ruinous row south of Railway Terrace) had been built by 1809. Further east was a sizeable hamlet in the floor of the valley and a smaller farm site at Rose Villa Farm. The single cottage on the west side of the beach by the old quay remained an isolated outpost of settlement.

3.1.3 Settlement function and characteristics

- There is little information on function and characteristics at this time beyond inferences from the prevalent economic activities. Farming remained important locally, and the Basset family at least were enjoying the scenic qualities of the area, with rock-cut bathing pools and a number of small summerhouses along the clifftops.

3.2 1809-41

3.2.1 Economic activity

- Described in 1827 as perhaps Cornwall's most important port, by 1830 there were signs of a fall in trade, partly because of competition from the Redruth & Chasewater Railway and Devoran. The Incline was built in 1838 to connect to the Hayle Railway (a mineral line) and the Camborne mines. Now that Portreath was directly linked to both great mining areas (Gwennap and Camborne) the port revitalised and there was limited expansion in extent and provision of facilities (ore hutches, the extension of the sea wall, tramroad and railway sidings, a customhouse store and a coastguard station). Fishing and boat building continued to be important secondary activities.
- There was expansion in other commercial and industrial activity in the settlement – a limekiln was built on the quays, a tin smelting house was established, the stamping mill at Glenfeadon was newly re-built in 1830, copper was being collected from the beach in 1832 and the small and relatively anonymous mine workings continued around Portreath.

3.2.2 Extent of settlement

- There was little room for housing around the harbour, although there was some infill in the line of Tregea Terrace, and some rebuilding of Railway Terrace following the construction of the rail incline. Settlement was confined to continuing the earlier rows, with a few new cottages along the Poldice Plateway track at Sunny Corner.

3.2.3 Settlement function and characteristics

- Increasing variety of activities led to new building types (customs store, coastguard station, tin smelter), and there is evidence of an increasingly prosperous community, with better quality houses (Primrose Terrace), and a chapel of ease to Illogan (1841), although smuggling was rife.

3.3 1841-77

3.3.1 Economic activity

- An inner basin and slip were added to the harbour in 1846, with further extensions in the 1860s. Shipbuilding became important in the 1860s and 1870s; part of the pilchard cellars courtyard was demolished or converted for the new slips and shipyard, although seine fishing for pilchards continued.

- The harbour yards expanded slightly and an extensive system of tramways and rails fed the ore hutches and coalyards. By 1855 as Devoran and Hayle became the preferred outlet for the major mining areas, the Poldice Plateway fell into disrepair, although still occasionally used at least to 1885. Coal importing became the primary activity in the harbour.
- Quarrying took place along the valley, and sand and gravel extraction on the beach; it was used locally and exported, although remained relatively small-scale.
- Tin streaming continued, as did small-scale mining until at least the mid 19th century in the lee of Western (or Tregoa) Hill.

3.3.2 Extent of settlement

- There was little change around the harbour, but along the south side of the valley Primrose Terrace was extended to its present length with large houses built on the old smelter site.
- The established groups of houses and farms in the east of the settlement area remained static, but the existing cluster of buildings in the valley bottom was considerably enlarged by the church (1841) large houses, the Methodist chapel (1858) and Greenfield Terrace.

3.3.3 Settlement function and characteristics

- Portreath became more urban in character with increasing stability and respectability of the population (with more professional and middle class inhabitants) and the development of larger houses, hotels (Portreath Hotel 1856, Basset Arms 1878), churches and chapels.
- Local trades increased slightly in number and range but the limited number of shopkeepers and grocers, blacksmith, carpenter and cabinet maker still derived much of their work from the shipping interest and there was a marked increase in the number of resident master mariners with the growth in the harbour's own fleet of ships. The working farms continued to be an important element in the make-up of the population.

3.4 1877-1908

3.4.1 Economic activity

- The Poldice Plateway was dismantled in the 1880s as the St Day mines failed, although the resurgence of tin mining around Camborne kept the Portreath Branch Railway in operation; the harbour was still busy and the main local employer. The Bain shipping company had turned to steamers by the end of the century, with a consequent decline in the traditional shipbuilding trades.
- The local seine fishery finally ended only in the early 20th century when the pilchard shoals deserted the north coast of Cornwall.
- There was an increase in tin streaming operations, which now took place at the beach end of the stream as well as by the school.
- There was some tourism (mostly from local mining towns), but the harbour and tin streaming tainted the sea and beach and Portreath suffered in competition with Porthtowan and Gwithian.

3.4.2 Extent of settlement

- Portreath scarcely increased in extent, apart from Penberthy Road (developed as far as the School, 1880), and a scatter of houses along both the south and north coastal slopes.
- In the existing built-up area many of the oldest groups of buildings were replaced by terraces of cottages around the turn of the century (the coastguard station in Penberthy Road, cottages in Primrose Terrace, and cottages west of the Portreath Hotel).

3.4.3 Settlement function and characteristics

- Portreath had been developing many characteristics of a small town, and although industrial stagnation in the later 19th century stopped that process, the extent of the harbour and yards, the number of good quality houses, the churches, institute, school and police station combined to give the character of something more than a village.
- By the beginning of the 20th century, Portreath had begun to develop as a resort, with houses and small chalets already appearing along the sea cliffs and slopes.

3.5 1906-1946

3.5.1 Economic activity

- The harbour and railway continued working up until the Second World War, mostly carrying coal, but with continuing decline in industrial and commercial activity the railway closed during the war.
- The tin streaming works continued to at least 1933, when the Red River was diverted.

3.5.2 Extent of settlement

- Development consisted almost entirely of holiday chalets, particularly on the upper slopes of the valley and the coastal slopes, and more urbane bungalows on land not developed before in the valley bottom, or along the now defunct Poldice Plateway route (Sunnyvale Road).

3.5.3 Settlement function and characteristics

- Portreath was by 1946 essentially a holiday and residential village, with a small vestigial harbour function. As well as the coastguard and Portreath harbour, Kelly's 1931 Directory lists shopkeepers, hotels, refreshment rooms, genteel retired ladies and navy men.
- Recently improved moorland on Nancekuke Common to the north of Portreath was taken over and made into an airfield during WWII, with associated defence batteries and operational buildings built elsewhere around the valley.

3.6 Post 1946

- Occasional coasters still used the harbour up to the 1960s but it had ceased to function commercially by the end of the decade, and is now used for leisure and small-scale fishing. The once extensive quays and yards were developed for housing by the end of the 1960s.
- By the 1990s the airbase too had been closed, with only a minimal early-warning radar function retained.

4 Surviving historical components/extent of loss (Fig 3)

4.1 Pre-1809

There are fragmentary remains of the earliest phases of development in Portreath. Footings of the 1713 harbour survive [4] and Smugglers Cottage [28], while apparently 18th century in date, may incorporate earlier fish cellars. The bathing pools [2] and summer houses (outside the area of Figure 4) built by the Bassets also survive in the valley by Western Hill, together with very fragmentary remains of the southern Battery [5][32], now obscured and recently partly built over by a garage attached to Battery House [31] and a new house recently completed above Battery Point.

Of the main harbour, most of the earliest phases still survive, although altered in part by later extensions, with many of the ancillary structures, such as Deadman's Tower [7] and the Daymark [3], and part at least of the fish palace of 1803 incorporated into the current Waterfront Inn [102]. Only the route of the Plateway [17] is traceable, there being no remaining identifiable fabric.

Much of Tregua Terrace [41-45] and Railway Terrace [111] survives from this time, as does the whole of Harbour Terrace [57, 58], which still forms an important group with the harbour itself, although only Cliff Cottage and Cliff House, and perhaps the core of the Portreath Hotel survive of the northern row. The major losses have been the old, probably farming hamlets, in the valley floor to the east of the harbour – the large group in the central area now represented by only a single house (Roselyn [67]), which may be 18th rather than early 19th century in date – although no. 1 Glendale Villas [117] may be of the same date, and is certainly part of the pre-Coastguard cottage development. Of the farm and cottage group at the east of the site (Rose Villa Farm [81]), no buildings identifiably from this early period remain, although the surviving field boundaries [80] may well be pre-19th century.

4.2 1809-1841

The principal expansion in the harbour area in this period was associated with the building of the Hayle Railway, and its associated tramways and yards to the south of the docks. Of this relatively large scale development, the only remains are the inclined plane of the railway itself [13][105], together with the bridge over Glenfeadon Terrace, and the extended sea wall [103] running south from the lengthened pier. Nothing else appears to survive of the various buildings in the harbour complex or associated with the rail and tramway sidings. Glenfeadon Terrace [89] and the western half of Primrose Terrace [94] are of this date, as are the principal domestic buildings still surviving in Portreath, Bassets Acre [92] and Glenfeadon House [23]. The small group of cottages [70][71] built at this time to the north of the Plateway at Sunny Corner survives, although the southernmost row was demolished in the later 19th century [107].

4.3 1841-77

This period saw the greatest expansion in both the harbour area and settlement as a whole, and most of the structures of this phase still stand. The two major docks added to the harbour, and the widened quays remain despite later redevelopment, while the infilling and completion of the long row on the south side of the valley, from Tregae Terrace east to Primrose Terrace, largely dates from this period. The principal loss in this area has been the demolition of the United Methodist Chapel [95], while amongst the villas and houses along Penberthy Road [74][75], and Greenfield Terrace [72] behind them, all built in this period, the only major loss has similarly been Wightwick's Anglican church of 1841 [21] (the late 20th century church stands on the site). Of the stream works [18] that operated south of the present school site nothing above ground now clearly remains, although there may be earthworks and watercourses surviving and, indeed the whole length of the stream appears to have been embanked and bridged at this time, the bridges in particular showing a unity of detail that suggests a single phase of building [83 & 84]. Of the farming hamlet at the east end of Portreath (Rose Villa Farm) the farmhouse [81] and outbuilding [82] survive. The gradually decaying battery, especially that on the south side of the harbour [5] was replaced by the standing Battery House [31] at this time, although some platforms and embankments survive above the house [32], some of which have only recently been destroyed by the building of a house within the site area.

4.4 1877-1908

The few new structures added to the settlement area at this time, not surprisingly, survive well, particularly the road works and walls [56], along Lighthouse Hill, the small brick building [106] and the stone and timber sheds [50] [51] on the quayside (the latter may be early 20th century rebuilds). The large cliff-side villas north and south of the harbour which preceded the early 20th century spread of bungalows still stand, although altered and extended [29] [37] [54]. At the east end of the settlement, the school [79], Basset Terrace [75] and the bridge [85] over the Red River are all of this period. While responsible for the destruction of much of the earliest parts of the settlement, the new terraces built within the study area at this time survive as one of the most characteristic elements in the make up of the village, especially 1-5 Lighthouse Hill [61], 12-14 Glenfeadon Terrace [87] and above all the coastguard complexes in Penberthy Road [25]. Also of this period is the surviving church institute [26].

4.5 1908-1946

While the 20th century was largely a time of decline and loss of industrial buildings, farming and early industrial cottages [47], [107] [108], the considerable expansion of the settlement area is reflected by the survival, largely unaltered, of numbers of small chalets on the valley sides [30] [33][34] [39] [69]. Probably slightly later were the first proper bungalows, some standing together with the chalets along the upper valley slopes [40] [90], most being built as speculative developments within the settlement itself [68] [64] [65] [78]. The gaps in the line of the plots along Penberthy Road show the slow-down in building caused by the Second World War rather than through losses, although some buildings south of the Square do seem to have fallen victim to road-widening schemes in the 1960s redevelopment of the harbour area. The only other significant surviving buildings from this period are the small early 20th century church hall [101] and the timber building on the quayside [51].

5 Character

5.1 Built environment

Although Portreath has never been more than a village in status, and has only a small population, its urban fabric and industrial past has given it something of the character of a small town. The approach along Penberthy Road with the high quality historical fabric of large villas, school, coastguard station, glimpses through parallel streets to the houses behind, all lead to what should be the focal point. Yet The Square is disappointing, lacking definition and historical context; the harbour, which perhaps provided this culmination of the streetscape in earlier days, has now lost meaning amid the 1960s housing estate, which bears little relationship to the historic use, grain, layout, character, materials and detailing of either the harbour buildings themselves, or the surrounding historic streets. Because the original rows were set at such a distance apart to the north and south of the valley, the intervening space begs a scale of activity, if not necessarily buildings, which is now sadly lacking.

Above all, though, is the dramatic coastal and valley setting, especially around the harbour mouth and the intimate and romantically picturesque side cove by Smugglers Cottage.

Portreath's surviving buildings are generally of a high quality. It has a good collection of mid 19th century villas, especially on the north side of Penberthy Road. It also has an unusual number of late terraces replacing or partly replacing earlier cottages. There are odd instances of older cottages left apparently in the middle of later terraces, reflecting the piecemeal manner in which the settlement grew as the original hamlets coalesced. This applies particularly to Penberthy Road [25][67][117], 1-5 Lighthouse Hill [61] and Cliff Cottage [61][113] and Tregea Terrace [42] [45] and Railway Terrace [46][111]. The only true early row left is Tregea Terrace [41-45], which has a tremendous variety of buildings and many later insertions; it is colourful, has lots of changes in material and has a seaside character. Given this relatively early origin, therefore, incremental damage to the garden boundaries is particularly regrettable.

Glenfeadon Terrace [89] has pretensions to architecture in its dressed stone and well-detailed voussoirs and arched heads, and may have been built as an architectural set-piece with Bassets Acre [92] and Glenfeadon House [23].

Greenfield Terrace, with its distinctive porches, is of particular interest for its early date (1860s) and may be unique in this respect in Cornwall.

Despite the loss of the United Methodist Chapel and the rebuilding of the church, which took away two of Portreath's most prominent and important buildings, other public buildings make a positive contribution to the townscape: a good chapel, reading room, church hall, good school. These public buildings tend to be quite small scale compared to some of the larger industrial towns which the port served (Camborne, Redruth), a reminder of Portreath's village status.

The chalets and bungalows, many in old quarries on the valley sides, are an important part of the settlement's historic character. These, together with the terraces as detailed above, contribute to Portreath being one of the best places to get a feel for the early 20th century seaside experience in Cornwall, and the legacy of the miners' summer weekends.

Because Portreath was not a truly industrial town, it does not have the number of workshops and outbuildings as, for example, St Just or Camborne. However, those that do exist are, as a result of their relative scarcity, of great significance to such a small place, in historical, townscape and social terms. These include the coastguard

store, the small building at Harbour House, one or two along Tregea Terrace, the Basset Arms, Rose Villa, the smithy, Glenfeadon Castle, the summerhouses, the Lighthouse Tower, the Daymark, Deadman's Hut and other harbour buildings.

Walls are an important feature of Portreath. They are never so tall as to hide the private spaces beyond, but they do fulfil the role of definition well. For example, the harbour sea wall, the Harbour Terrace enclosing walls, the walls to the roads from the harbour to Lighthouse Hill, the Harbour House Wall, the walls along Penberthy Road and the walls to Glenfeadon all make a positive contribution to character. Where the walls that once existed have been lost definition evaporates, such as on the south side of the harbour development, the west side of The Square, Sunnyvale Road, roadside of Tregea Terrace and the south side of Penberthy Road. The occasional loss of front walls on the north side of Penberthy shows the extent to which this loss can adversely affect the historic character of the settlement.

5.2 Materials and local details

Most of the historical buildings in Portreath are consistent in their use of the local killas, a light sandy-coloured, friable stone, used almost always with granite lintels and details. The stone is relatively soft, and some earlier buildings [28][117] have been rendered and painted. Some historical buildings were rendered from the outset to allow for architectural detail (particularly Battery House [31]). Granite figures more prominently in the engineering structures – the harbour, railway incline and bridges for instance. It is also used extensively around the quayside as a surfacing material. Garden and yard walls are generally of rubble-stone construction, and form an important element of streetscape in some areas (for instance Lighthouse Hill and Glenfeadon Terrace).

Roofs are of slate, or modern artificial replacements – the roofscape in Portreath is of great importance given its valley location. Most of the early 20th century bungalows which form such an important feature on the valley slopes, are of render with slate roofs and generally the colour tones of slate still predominate.

Modest architectural detail and display are a feature of Portreath – including the use of cut stone details (Glenfeadon Terrace [89]), timber and stained glass storm-porches (Greenfield Terrace [72] and Penberthy Road [75]) and cast iron verandas [73]. More grandly architectural, but still part of this locally distinctive pattern, are Bassets Acre [92] and Glenfeadon House [23], like Battery House making much use of cast and moulded detail. The seaside location and picturesque views led to the building of many follies, gazebos and summerhouses in the settlement [24][55] and in the valley west of Smuggler's Cottage [28] (not mapped), and this was reflected in the decoration and enrichment of many of the houses themselves.

5.3 Spaces, views and panoramas

5.3.1 Spaces

There are precious few spaces left in Portreath of any quality. What should be the principal space is The Square, but this has become nothing more than a badly defined road junction. The harbour side adjacent to this is also no real space, because it lacks definition as to what it is in the sense that it appears to be neither private nor public, in use or derelict. The other parts of the quays have either been built over or very badly restored and there has consequently been loss of all details on the north side.

The formerly open coal wharves and harbour yards were built over in the 1960s and have no sense of place, or creation of space, and again display the problems of private/public conflict. The terraces by the harbour side similarly fail to define or relate to anything and even what should be an historic landscape around the Waterfront Inn is just an empty space left over from development.

The former 'Green' where people used to picnic *en masse* is now a formless and unlovely car park. Play areas are small, tucked away and tacky. By far the best space is the beach, which has an enduring but inevitably ever shifting quality, while the valley with its heath and woods is a permanent reminder of the natural space in which Portreath is located.

However, the public/private lack of definition continues around Smugglers Cottage [28] and at the rear of the Hotel [27] where it is uncertain whether public access is permitted. Footpaths form valuable permeable spaces. For example, there is good footpath access up the side valleys (Glenfeadon/Illogan Woods), although this is not obvious from the central area

5.3.2 Views and panoramas

There is a variety of both long and short views across and through Portreath that are important to its character. Those across the valley from each side and from the tops of the valley down to its bottom all serve to frame the settlement. There are also views out of the village up the valley to Carn Brea and associated landscape in the distance and down the valley, even from Penberthy Road. Views of and into the woods are also important through the cottages and up alleys and rear closes. Good examples of this are at Sunnyvale Road, Railway Cottages and Glenfeadon. From the shore and harbour there are long ranging views to sea and along the coast, with views into Smugglers Bay. More intimate views are provided from the bridge and Battery Hill along Tregea Terrace.

Within the town there are glimpses behind the street frontages to other houses at Greenfield Terrace and Glenfeadon Terrace, giving depth to the townscape. The view of stone terraces set against the steep hillsides along Basset Terrace is of particular note. Similarly, Tregea Terrace is seen against the steep and wild hillside and it is difficult to believe it was once neatly divided into back gardens.

Despite the spread of bungalow development, views of the valley and the wider landscape are dominated by historical features such as the chapel, school, Glenfeadon House and Bassets Acre, the railway incline, Tregea Terrace/Railway Terrace, the harbour, Battery House and Smugglers Cottage.

5.3.3 Landscape

The mature gardens throughout the study area give Portreath a surprisingly good amount of quality private soft landscaping. In contrast, Sunnyvale is bare and the rear gardens do not preserve and much less enhance either the historic character of the settlement, nor its current appearance and amenity.

The stream is now heavily overgrown, and while nominally attractive, this actually detracts from its historical character and use as a canalised, constructed channel with architectural qualities, especially the bridges.

The valley sides provide a constant backdrop of scrub woodland, which is all recent since early 20th century photographs show how close cropped the slopes were as a result of industrial and farming activity.

6 Designations

6.1 Scheduled monuments (Fig 4)

There is one scheduled monument in Portreath, the daymark/coastguard lookout [3] on the cliffs north of the harbour (County no. 914).

6.2 Listed Buildings (Fig 4)

Within the Portreath study areas are the following listed buildings, all at Grade II:

Glenfeadon House [23], Glenfeadon Terrace

Glenfeadon Castle (listed as Gazebo)[24], Glenfeadon Terrace

Portreath Harbour [12], including slipway

Portreath Incline [13]

Trecarrel [19], Penberthy Road

Milepost [20], Penberthy Road

Methodist Church [22], Penberthy Road

The few listed buildings in Portreath reflect in a better way than most industrial settlements in Cornwall its industrial origins, including the principal surviving elements - the harbour and the railway incline. The usual concentration on architectural quality has fortunately led to the listing of the surviving chapel, in itself a potent symbol of Cornwall's industrial heritage, together with the home of Portreath's one outstanding figure in the industrial and commercial history of the settlement – Glenfeadon House, although wrongly given as a home of the Bassets and not, as it actually was, David Bain.

6.3 Conservation Areas

There are no conservation areas.

6.4 Other designations

Policies have been taken from various sources, particularly the Cornwall Structure Plan (SP) and the relevant District Local Plan (LP); only those policies or allocations directly relevant to the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment or character of the settlement have been selected.

Although the village development envelope for Portreath is bounded by Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Areas of Great Scientific Value (to the north and east), by Areas of Great Landscape Value (to the north, east and south) and by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a Heritage Coast zone (to the south-west), none of these various national, county and local designations actually apply within the settlement itself.

The upper slopes of the valley, especially on the southern side south of Tregea Hill, are covered by designations, although the most intrusive group of bungalows and houses in the settlement, including one recently built on part of the site of the Battery, lies within the AONB. There are proposals to include the village site within the Area of Great Landscape Value, which would have the effect of limiting inappropriate development that impacted upon the natural environment. The village is within the designated coastal zone in Kerrier, and this does provide some policy restriction on development within and protection for the local built environment, coastal and recreational uses, and the natural environment.

The archaeological interest of the industrial remains in the District are recognised in the local plan, and Portreath is identified (para. 4.35) as one of the settlements within Kerrier where archaeological investigation and recording may be a necessary part of granting permission for development.

Only policies relating to special control of advertisements, and the district-wide policies on use of the county highway network apply to the main part of the settlement.

7 Current uses and forces for change

Portreath is the only settlement on the north coast of Kerrier District. Relatively large by local standards, it is the nearest beach resort to the Camborne-Redruth conurbation, and has a wider holiday base as well, which means that it has more extensive facilities in the way of shops and pubs etc. than villages of a similar size. It is now almost entirely residential with only limited employment outside the tourist industries; the harbour is used by pleasure craft and has a small fishing industry severely hampered by lack of adequate storage space and limited quayside access, largely as a result of the housing scheme in the harbour area.

The greatest change in recent history in Portreath has been the 1960s redevelopment of the harbour area with housing. Judged in terms of its relationship to the historic fabric and character of the harbour and the settlement as a whole, the conclusion that this development fails to preserve or enhance local distinctiveness or the special historic character of Portreath is unavoidable. The lessons to be learnt from this development are legion and, if applied well, should ensure any future development enhances Portreath rather than detracts from its distinctive character.

The quality and historic interest of the surviving structures in Portreath and the often-picturesque townscape, especially once away from the harbour area, are so great that the adverse impact of the harbour development is not insuperable. Even the building of bungalows and summerhouses on the hillsides above the village, although requiring careful monitoring and control, is a legitimate extension of well-established character going back 200 years. The great natural beauty of the valley and coast deserves every effort to improve the built environment so as to complement the outstanding quality of its setting.

The narrow, enclosed nature of the valley, together with the raft of designations protecting the natural environment on the very edges of Portreath, mean that expansion outside the currently developed area is unlikely. In any case, any such development would cause harm to the setting and character of the settlement. There remain rather more development opportunities from a conservation and urban design point of view within the area than the Local Plan would suggest: the constraints to development in this sense being more related to the lack of sewage and other infrastructure facilities.

In many parts of the village, development could seriously improve the fragmentary nature of the townscape, and restore and enhance the character around the re-developed harbour and The Square. Given that Portreath is now above all else a beach resort, it is symptomatic of the problems it faces that what was once an area known as 'The Green', and the scene of mass picnics and tea-treats is now a beach-side car-park. This is insufficient to meet demand in the peak season, and

Portreath is barely able to cope with traffic problems, exacerbated by limited capacity on the small roads leading to the village. Any extra provision of car-parking or more road 'improvements' can only be harmful to the character of the settlement since one of the principal spaces within the village around The Square is little more than an oversized road junction, neither pedestrian friendly nor visually satisfying.

Penberthy Road, especially on its south side, suffers from being entirely a piecemeal 20th century development, and also from the intrusion of telegraph poles. The main problem is that the frontages of the plots lack the definition and enclosure characteristic of the bungalows at the eastern end.

The new church, whatever its merits in itself, fails to address the plot or the street at all well, and the church yard is the most dispiriting space.

The positive contribution made to the character of Portreath by the informal and piecemeal chalet and bungalow development on the valley sides has been compromised by inappropriate later designs which, on the whole, have been bigger in scale and lacking in detailing. They are generally on the crest of the slopes, with the result that they do not sit well in the landscape, but rather loom over it. Further, they are a denser form of development, with a consequent loss of the wide scatter of small buildings. This has had a particularly intrusive impact to the rear of Glenfeadon.

There are empty plots throughout Portreath, which probably could and should be developed to enhance the sense of place. Careful and informed design, reflecting local distinctiveness in plot layout, use, building type and scale, use of materials and detailing, as required by local plan and national policies, is needed to ensure that development of these plots will enhance the special character of the area – the 1960s developments failed to reflect these matters to the detriment of the historic (and scenic) environment.

8 Industrial significance

Portreath was dominated by its harbour, and this was above all a mineral harbour. Although there was some fishing, and there were other limited economic activities in the valley, especially farming and tin streaming, with some small-scale mining round and about, the principal activities at Portreath were exporting copper ore and importing coal. Even the local shipbuilding businesses were based on this single activity. Portreath's industrial significance is thus bound up with its link to the local copper mines, at first around Scorrier, and later Camborne.

Portreath occupies a key place in Cornish industrial history as part of the earliest phase of the development of railways, and the parallel development of railways and port infrastructure, and through its connections with some of the great Cornish industrialists: the Basset, Fox and Williams families. It has many important surviving structures, and one at least (the Hayle Railway Incline) unique in its scale and quality. It should never be regarded as just another mining village, and is one of the small and special group of mineral ports that make Cornwall so distinct. In the person of David Wise Bain it produced one of its own local figures of substance, and there is clearly much more to discover about the industrial history of Portreath.

In addition to this is the history of Portreath as a small resort, from at least the late 18th century. While this may not be directly linked to the industrial past in Cornwall, its connections with the Bassets and their inevitable industrial links, as well as its role in providing for the working populations of the Camborne-Redruth mining districts in the 19th and early 20th centuries have scarcely been researched; the assembly of 400 temperance non-conformists from the mining districts at a tea-treat at Portreath in 1837 is as much part of the industrial history of Cornwall as the development of the harbour and railways themselves.

9 Recommendations

9.1 Historic areas

The designation of a conservation area is recommended that encompasses the area of architectural and historic significance as summarised in the character section (5) above.

There appears to be a considerable surviving landscaped garden with water features and terraces around and to the rear of Glenfeadon House. This should be further investigated with a view to inclusion on the District-wide list of Gardens of Local Interest.

9.2 Historic buildings

9.2.1 Listed buildings

The Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest in Portreath should be revised on the basis of a general thematic survey of industrial remains in the county. This should place more emphasis on historic character and less on purely architectural assessment, but also recognise that certain building types and details are unique to or typical of Cornwall and are not strictly comparable to superficially similar types elsewhere in the country. This is particularly true of the surviving early examples of workers housing, those in Lighthouse Hill [113] and perhaps the Portreath Arms (the core of which is 18th century) [27], Harbour Terrace [57] [58], Tregoa Terrace [41] [42] and Railway Terrace [111]. Glenfeadon Terrace [89], Penberthy Road [67] [117] and the short rows north of Sunnyvale Road [70] [71] are also worthy of investigation.

Two larger houses are already listed, but there are other exactly contemporary examples in Portreath which have architectural interest in their own right - Bassets Acre in particular [92], Trevennen [73] (adjacent to the listed Trecarrel [19]), Harbour House [62], Glenbracken [91] and some of the best examples in Primrose Terrace [94].

A more contentious issue may be the listing of some of the early 20th century chalets. These, once owned in large numbers by the industrial population around the mining districts, form important groups at several points along the north coast, including Hayle, Portreath, and Porthtowan. They are declining in numbers and subject to extensive alterations, and represent an historical movement and building type that is not likely to be seen again. A thematic survey aimed at listing some of the best examples of the type in Cornwall should consider those at Portreath [30] [33] [34] [39] [110].

There are individual structures of historic interest in Portreath that might be considered – Smugglers Cottage [8]; Battery House [31]; the sea wall [103]; the bridges over the Red River [83] [84] [85] [114]; the school [79]; some of the summer houses [55], including those in the slopes and cliffs west of Smugglers Cottage not included within the study area (the Bassets were building these around Bassets Cove to the west of Western Hill in the late 18th century as well).

In Portreath, an additional priority is to re-assess the harbour area, which is made up of a number of discrete structures that are currently covered by a blanket designation which leaves scope for arguments that some elements may not be covered by the listing. These structures should be individually identified and listed for clarity. The vexed question of curtilage and the full extent of protection of the quays beyond the harbour walls should also be investigated. Some additional structures not yet listed should be considered for inclusion as part of the overall complex: [7] [10] [50] [51] [56] [102] [103] [116].

9.2.2 Local list

A list of locally significant structures which contribute substantially to the character of the settlement would be a significant additional management tool, based on the combined criteria of both listing and Article 4 Directions, and backed up by a Buildings-at-Risk survey, detailed Article 4 Directions and substantive and enforceable policies in the local plan. This could also back up applications for grant aid.

9.2.3 Archaeological remains

Protection of the archaeological remains in Portreath may be appropriate, especially for some of the structures in Portreath that fall outside the listing criteria, for instance the 18th century rock-cut bathing pools [2], the remnants of the 1713 quay [4], or the ship-building slip south of the harbour [10]. The Red River was canalised, embanked and bridged in the 19th century, probably as part of the tin-streaming works along its length [6][18], and there may well be further evidence of this industry surviving, especially to the south [18] of the school. There are also adits, chimneys, leats, ponds etc. of undated mining enterprises surviving, especially in the area around Smuggler's Cottage and in Illogan Woods to the south-east of Portreath.

9.3 Policy and management

9.3.1 General

The Local Plan and Structure Plan provide a good number of policies and guidance which could be applied to Portreath, including those dealing with the built environment, coastal planning, natural environment, recreation, housing and infrastructure. At present the various policies, while in aggregate a sound basis for decision making, are haphazard and reactive in their effects, yet the pressures on Portreath, and the need to rediscover its character from the disastrous interventions of the mid-late 20th century, demand that the initiative be taken to guide and manage the settlement in a positive way.

Given the confined nature of the settlement, its location within the protected coastal zone, the problems associated with tourist demand in the high season, and inadequate infrastructure (sewerage), combined with the particular historical and landscape qualities of Portreath, an integrated village plan, based heavily on its conservation and heritage value, is highly recommend.

This could be crucial in providing for all-year visitor appeal in Portreath, changing the type of visitor (given the decline in traditional seaside holiday making), providing a new base for development within the village, improving the visual structure and townscape, and preserving and enhancing the outstanding historic interest of Portreath.

This needs to be based on detailed surveys of standing fabric and buried potential, as well as a full assessment of the incremental changes affecting character. Conservation Area status would be an integral step in this process, particularly given the grant aid and external investment this could attract from both national and European sources.

9.3.2 Policy Recommendations:

1. Article 4 Directions to control the demolition of walls for the creation of hard standings and alterations to individual houses, and to prevent demolition of free-standing outbuildings, with particular reference to Penberthy Road and Sunnyvale Road.

Reason: To protect the character of Portreath against inappropriate incremental alterations and demolition.

2. Full survey of archaeological potential in the settlement, and an additional policy requiring proper recording of undesignated archaeologically sensitive sites before development.

Reason: To comply with and strengthen existing Local Plan commitments to prevent proposals that would harm the archaeological heritage of the settlement and industrial remains in general (paragraph 4.35), and thereby preserve the special character of Portreath.

3. Future developments to respect the historic grain and development pattern in and around the village, and incorporate a greater quality of layout, materials, landscaping on the outer fringes of the settlement area, and a more appropriate scale in the central area.

Reason: To provide an appropriate setting and amenity for the historic core.

4. Presumption against development outside the built-up area, particularly in the open hillsides to the north and south of Portreath.

Reason: To retain the discrete identity of Portreath and protect both its setting and the open countryside

5. Development or redevelopment of the small commercial area in the centre of Portreath should be actively encouraged.

Reason: To provide both enhanced facilities and a proper focus to the settlement now that the historical focus of the harbour area has been irreversibly altered in its nature and impact.

6. While a further redevelopment of the housing in the harbour area is not likely, incremental improvement and improved access to the quays which enhanced the historic fabric or character could improve its use as a working harbour.

Reason: To improve the economic and employment base of Portreath and provide added attraction for potential visitors.

7. Management schemes, development briefs and conservation plans for some of the most sensitive historic buildings and areas. Prime examples are the harbour, the Red River, The Square, Railway Terrace (to north and south), Sunnyvale Road, the undeveloped plots in Penberthy Road; the land attached to the school and Rose Villa farm.

Reason: To guide development and promote change that will preserve and enhance the character of the town.

8. Enhancement schemes for many of the important spaces in the town, especially at The Square, Railway Terrace, and the sea front. These will be dependent on close co-ordination with County Highways engineers in tackling traffic management.

Reason: To reverse the existing detrimental effects of intrusive traffic management schemes and signage on historic fabric and townscape within the town, and to enhance the townscape and the setting of historic buildings.

9. Future road improvements and/or provision of street lighting and furniture to respect the historical building line and reflect differences in the local townscape, and seek to restore the sense of 'street' rather than 'road', particularly in The Square/the Harbour and Penberthy Road.

Reason: To address Portreath's individuality as a settlement and restore a sense of enclosure and scale.

- Existing town trails and guides and other promotional initiatives to be integrated further and promoted as a single package, and partnerships developed with bodies like the National Trust and the Mineral Tramways Project. This could go beyond promotional activity, and seek to acquire, re-use, enhance and promote sites in Portreath as both an end result of and a stimulus to regeneration investment and, by integration with existing initiatives such as the Mineral Tramways trails, to help develop completely new economic activities, such as specialist tourism. An independent visitor centre should be considered – the display in the Waterfront Inn, while to be fully supported, is not well signposted, and is by its nature limited for access. A series of well-signposted town and industrial heritage trails could be created, which could also help resolve the general problem of a perceived conflict between the private and public access to various sites and routes.

Reason: To present Portreath's unique heritage to a wider audience and to attract new visitors and associated regeneration initiatives.

- Further studies of adjoining areas outside the existing CISI programme, especially the area of mine remains and the recreational buildings associated with the Bassets to the west of Portreath.

Reason: To ensure a full and accurate record and understanding of the industrial and historical setting of this area.

10 References

10.1 Primary Sources

1807 OS drawings

1841 Tithe Map

1880 OS 25 inch map

1908 OS 25 inch map

1946 RAF air photographs

1995 CCC air photographs

Cornwall Sites and Monuments Record (computerised database of archaeological sites maintained by HES)

Listed Building maps and descriptions

Trade Directories (various editions)

10.2 Publications

Cornwall Structure Plan, 1997, Cornwall County Council

Kerrier Local Plan Deposit Draft, 1999, Kerrier District Council
Pearse, R, 1964 edn., *The Ports and Harbours of Cornwall*, H.E.Warne
Thomas, J, 1990, *More than a Village*, Dyllansow Truran
Acton, R, 1997, *Exploring Cornwall's Tramway Trails*, Vol 2, Landfall Publications.

Appendix 1: Detailed history and physical development

App 1.1 Pre - 1809

App 1.1.1 Economic activity

The earliest reference to Portreath is in a now lost document of 1485, the name meaning ‘sandy cove’ or ‘beach cove’. Although Carew described tin streaming in Portreath valley in 1602, little else is recorded before 1713 when a contract was drawn up for a quay near Amy’s Point. In the secondary cove by Smugglers Cottage and sheltered in the lee of Western Hill, the quay was to be 150 feet long and 35 or 40 feet high, its remains being found in 1983 (SMR – PRN 25013). This small harbour was probably served by winches up the adjacent cliffs, just as at Trevaunance Cove, St Agnes. There is limited evidence of mining in the area; there were certainly small and already ancient mines both to the west (North Cliffs) and east (Porthtowan), and these may well have been served by the small harbour.

A new pier and, indeed, a whole new harbour was laid out from 1760, financed by the Bassets, but leased to Fox & co. of Falmouth, who carried out extensions and improvements 1778-81, adding the ‘New Basin’ in 1800. The harbour was ideally placed to import coal from and export ore to the coalfields and copper smelters of South Wales. Although primarily aimed at serving the local mining industry (in which the Bassets owned extensive interests) it was also home to an active fishing fleet from an early period, and the large courtyard of the pilchard palace (fish cellars) was built in 1803. The new harbour was defended by two small batteries built in 1782 on sites to the north and south; these actually saw action once when they captured a French ship in the harbour. By 1800 the ‘Pepperpot’ day-mark on the cliffs north of the harbour had been built, which also served as a coastguard lookout.

Although not clearly shown on the OS survey drawings, there was almost certainly tin streaming activity in the valley floor, and some evidence that a stamping mill already stood at Glenfeadon.

The growing success of the port and the large quantities of goods moved in and out showed up the need to improve on the very poor roads and tracks to and from the great mining areas. A tramway from Dolcoath was proposed in 1806 but not built, and instead one was constructed from the other great copper area around Scorrier and St. Day. The Poldice Plateway, begun 1809 and shown on the OS survey drawings of that year, was the first such to be built in Cornwall. Costing £20,000, it was owned by the Fox and Williams families who owned the mines around North Downs and north Scorrier which were served by the tramway, and also leased the harbour. It was horse-drawn and had the first cast iron rails used in Cornwall; it soon became a major curiosity in its own right in the county, quite apart from its great commercial success. By 1819 it had been extended its full length to Crofthandy (south of Scorrier).

App 1.1.2 Extent of settlement

Apart from the harbour itself, there were a number of associated sheds and stores buildings, particularly on the south side of the basin. On the north side of the harbour, Harbour Terrace had been built, probably in the late 18th century, and already extended as far as the current Portreath Hotel. On the south side, most of Tregea Terrace had been built although it, like the northern group, was composed of a series of small rows rather than the continuous line of development it later became. The short row up the slope to the south of Railway Terrace, now ruinous, was also built by this time. Further east up the valley was a sizeable hamlet, which survived until the construction of the coastguard station and terrace (in Penberthy Road) in the late 19th century, and a smaller farm site at Rose Villa Farm. The single cottage on the west side of the beach by the old quay remained an isolated outpost of settlement in the valley.

App 1.1.3 Settlement function and characteristics

There is little information on the people or activities in Portreath at this time, although it is clear that the small settlement depended entirely on the harbour with some fishing as well the mainstay coal and ore trades). The rest of the area was largely farming, but there is also evidence that Portreath was already being used for recreation at least by the Basset family themselves, a number of rock-cut bathing pools having been built in the late 18th century by Lord de Dunstanville for his wife. In the valley and small coves to the west of Smugglers Cottage the Bassets built a number of small summer houses, some of the remains of which still stand and are worthy of note, albeit outside the study area.

App 1.2 1809-41

App 1.2.1 Economic activity

Described in 1827 as perhaps Cornwall's most important port, by 1830 there were signs of a fall in trade, partly because the Redruth & Chasewater Railway was taking much of the trade from the Scorrier mines to Devoran, despite continuing efforts to improve the harbour, including extending the pier in 1824.

Connection with the Hayle Railway and the Camborne mines came with the building of the branch line and incline in 1838 (this was purely a mineral line, never carrying fare-paying passengers). This gave a new lease of life to the port; stimulated by the improved communications, the harbour handled ever-increasing quantities of coal and ore. There was limited expansion in the extent of the harbour area, comprising the construction of ore hutches the north side of the dock, and the extension of the main pier. By 1840 100,000 tons of copper ore a year was being shipped through Portreath and vast quantities of coal imported (about 700 shiploads each way per year). The huge dumps of copper ore and even larger dumps of coal awaiting shipment on the quays became a permanent aspect of Portreath, while the population of the mining district served by Portreath – the most highly industrialised region in the west of England - grew from 14000 to 30000 between 1800 and 1840.

Fishing and boat-building continued to be important secondary activities in the harbour, sufficient for a regatta organised in 1828 to have separate races for the local fishing boats and all other boats visiting the harbour. The harbour was sufficiently active to have a customhouse store (the port was subsidiary to St Ives), and a coastguard station by 1830.

During this period there was a degree of expansion in the range of commercial and industrial activity in the settlement, with a limekiln built on the harbour. More importantly, a tin smelting house was established by one Paul Burall in 1813 on the site now occupied by Glenfeadon House, and although it closed in 1825 (a year before Burall's death, by which time he was described as 'Gentleman', and a wealthy man), the buildings were still standing in 1848. The stamping mill at Glenfeadon was extant and possibly newly re-built in 1830, and the tenant also paid dues in 1832 for copper collected from the beach at Portreath.

Although never an important mining centre itself, there were several small and relatively anonymous workings around Portreath, as well links to the more extensive copper mining area around Porthtowan.

App 1.2.2 Extent of settlement

With the land around the harbour already largely allocated to the ore and coal yards, and increasingly to the tramroad and railway sidings, there was no room for housing in this area, although there was some infill in the line of Tregear Terrace, and some rebuilding of Railway Terrace following the construction of the rail incline.

The spread of settlement was almost entirely confined to continuing the row along on the south side of the valley, including the western half of Primrose Terrace, although a few cottages were also built along the Poldice Plateway track at what is now Sunny Corner.

App 1.2.3 Settlement function and characteristics

The increasing variety of activities in the settlement is reflected in the new building types erected (customs store, coastguard station, tin smelter), and there is evidence of an increasingly prosperous community, with better quality houses being built in Primrose Terrace than had been the case in Tregea Terrace. Some idea of the social cohesion of the community can be gained from events such as the regatta/fair organised in 1828 (largely under the auspices of the Basset family), or the Temperance meeting in 1837, when about 400 attended. The fact that Mr Walters of the Hotel lent them his brewing furnace for tea, is some indication of the facilities already available at the village, although the Hotel was probably commercial rather than serving leisured visitors. The culmination of this process of expansion and improvement came with the building of a chapel of ease to the parish church at Illogan. St Mary's was erected in 1841 from designs by one of the most prominent architects in Devon and Cornwall, George Wightwick.

Despite these indications of increasing prosperity and commercial activity, or perhaps because of them, smuggling was rife, with a gunfight taking place in 1830 at the customhouse store by the coastguard station.

App 1.3 1841-77

App 1.3.1 Economic activity

By the 1850s, the harbour was run by Williams and Portreath Co., with an inner basin and slip added in 1846, and further extensions in the 1860s, including the boat-building slipway on the south-west side. Ship building became important in the 1860s and 1870s when David Wise Bain, the harbour company's agent in 1856, set up his own business as general merchant, ship owner and builder. He operated a fleet of 18 schooners, mostly built on the slip south of the harbour, and shipped ore, especially coal. Part of the pilchard cellars courtyard was demolished to make way for the new slips, the remainder (now the Waterfront Inn) becoming part of the shipyard. The seine fishery associated with the pilchards continued throughout the century, despite the loss of the pilchard palace.

Further building took place in the harbour yards, which expanded slightly on the south-east side. An extensive system of tramways and rails fed the ore hutches on the north side of the docks (including shutes dropping down from the clifftop road to the north, removed by later expansion of the quayside), and the coalyards on the south side. By 1855 the Poldice Plateway had begun to fall into disrepair, although still occasionally used at least to 1885 (as reported in *The West Briton* newspaper). The decline of copper, the conversion of Redruth and Chasewater line to steam in the 1850s and the difficulty in using Portreath harbour in rough weather meant that Devoran became the preferred outlet for the Scorrier mines, while the Camborne group had equally direct links to superior harbour facilities at Hayle.

Although ore was still transported to Portreath via the Hayle Railway link, coal became increasingly the primary commodity in the harbour, reflected in the description of Williams and Portreath Co. in 1878 as coal, lime, slate and brick merchants.

The whole of the valley sides show evidence of quarrying (and sand and gravel extraction on the beach)— while each site was on a relatively small scale, and much would have been used locally, there may have been some wider export and use. Streamworks are still shown on the OS 1877 map south-east of the (later) school. The small mines that had operated in the area for decades continued into the mid 19th century; there are records of a Wheal Mary, some adits of which probably survive by

Smugglers Cottage, and there are chimneys further up the valley to the west of the cove, and North Wheal Virgin operated in the valley leading to Illogan Churchtown, south from Primrose Terrace. A number of unidentified buildings, ponds and leats are shown on the OS map in the valley behind the western battery and Smugglers Cottage, in the lee of Western (or Tregea) Hill. These may indicate some mining activity in the area.

App 1.3.2 Extent of settlement

The area of the yards around the harbour expanded only a little during the period and, as with the previous 30 years or so, there was no appreciable expansion in the settlement here. However, along the south side of the valley, Primrose Terrace was extended to its present length, the old smelter site being occupied by David Bain's own large house, Glenfeadon. The established groups of houses and farm buildings at the east end of the valley and along the Plateway on the north side expanded only slightly. In the central area the existing informal cluster of buildings in the valley bottom was considerably increased, to the west by the church (1841) and a large house (current Harbour House), and to the east by the Methodist Chapel (1858) and the associated row of large houses or villas to Penberthy Road, and Greenfield Terrace to the rear of this.

App 1.3.3 Settlement function and characteristics

The new development in Portreath at this time was more urban in character, with, in particular, the development of the villas and the terrace behind along the main road creating a more urbane approach to the harbour. The increasing stability and respectability of the population already seen in the early 19th century was crystallised in the mid century, symbolised by the building of the Anglican church and two Methodist chapels, as well as the large number of substantial houses and, above all, by the splendid house (Glenfeadon) built by the local industrial magnate, David Wise Bain.

Trade directories of the period (1856, 1866 and 1878) give a cross section of the population and an indication of the village's character. The growth in the harbour's own fleet is reflected in the increasing number of resident master mariners (2 in 1856, 11 in 1866), while the mariners, sailors, pilots and coastguards together consistently form the largest group. Although only ever with a limited number of shopkeepers and grocers, a blacksmith, carpenter and cabinet maker (all of whom probably derived most of their work from the shipping interest), the number of these traders did increase slightly over the period, while the single Portreath Hotel of 1856 was augmented by the Basset Arms by 1878. Working farms within the settlement area continued to form an important element in the make up of the population.

The most striking change is the increase in the middle classes – with at least three church ministers, three general and shipping agents, successful businessmen, senior officers and mariners and, above all, D. W. Bain.

At the close of the period *Harrod's Royal County Directory* described Portreath as a 'small but busy seaport and village', in exactly the same year (1878) that a cholera outbreak in the village brought in by foreign sailors is supposed to have wiped out almost the entire population.

App 1.4 1877-1908

App 1.4.1 Economic activity

The deepening crisis affecting much of the mining hinterland on which the docks at Portreath depended continued to the end of the century, each successive recovery merely prolonging what now appears an inevitable decline. The St Day mines never recovered from the crises of the 1860s and the rails of the Poldice Plateway were

finally lifted in the 1880s. While the harbour came more and more to depend on the coal trade, the resurgence of tin mining in the Camborne area in the second half of the century was sufficient to keep the Portreath branch railway in operation. The Basset family still regarded Portreath as a major source of income, and a series of lease agreements was negotiated with major mines on Basset owned land including the Seton group and Dolcoath, that gained great notoriety at the time, partly because they forced the mines to use only coal imported through Portreath. The harbour continued to be busy and to be the main employer in the village – the 1887 Jubilee celebrations included supper given by Basset and Bain to 115 men at Portreath including 75 porters and others employed in the harbour. The Bains' shipping company had turned to steamers by the end of the century, with a consequent decline in the traditional shipbuilding trades.

Although the local seine fishery had continued throughout the later 19th century, it finally ended in the early 20th century when the pilchard shoals deserted the north coast of Cornwall.

There was an increase in tin streaming operations, with the Portreath Streamworks Company being founded in 1887; works now took place at the beach end of the stream as well as by the school (OS 1906), and there was at least one resident tin stream owner in the village.

While there was an increasing trend for Portreath's scenic qualities to attract both new residents and visitors, particularly during the traditional summer break of the mining families from Camborne, the village suffered in competition with its neighbours at Porthtowan and Gwithian. As a local newspaper article in 1887 pointed out, the industrial use not only of the harbour but also increasingly of the stream itself, badly tainted the sea and beach.

App 1.4.2 Extent of settlement

The extent of settlement at Portreath was scarcely increased during this period, the main addition being along Penberthy Road (Basset Terrace) as far as the School (1880), and there was a scatter of houses along both the south and north coastal slopes by 1906 (the latter associated especially with the improvement of the road along the cliff front up to the lighthouse and sea-mark). The major change in the settlement was the replacement of most of the oldest groups of buildings in Portreath by terraces of cottages around the turn of the century, as at the new coastguard station in Penberthy Road, the group of cottages in Primrose Terrace immediately east of the railway incline, and those west of the Portreath Hotel.

App 1.4.3 Settlement function and characteristics

The mid 19th century had seen Portreath developing many characteristics of a small town, but the general industrial stagnation in Cornwall in the later 19th century stopped that process. Nevertheless, the extent of the harbour and yards, the number of good quality houses, the churches, institute, school and police station combined to give the character of something more than a village, even though it never attained any greater status than this.

By the beginning of the 20th century, Portreath had begun to take on the first vestige of its later role as a resort, with houses and small chalets already appearing along the sea cliffs and slopes.

App 1.5 1908-1946

App 1.5.1 Economic activity

This period saw a continuing decline in industrial and commercial activity. The harbour and railway both continued working up until the Second World War, mostly carrying coal, although the railway closed during the war, when the rails were pulled up and a barricade put over the bottom of the incline as anti-invasion measure.

The tin streaming works continued until at least 1933, when the Red River was diverted to the north of Portreath so as to clean up the beach, leaving only the small stream now running through the village.

App 1.5.2 Extent of settlement

Development consisted almost entirely of bungalows, particularly on the upper slopes of the valley and the coastal slopes. While some of these were quite substantial, most were small timber chalets, typical of those built by the urban population of Camborne-Redruth and Truro all along the north coast at places such as Porthtowan, Portreath, Gwithian Towans and Riviere Towans. More urbane bungalows were built in the valley bottom, on the south side of Penberthy Road, an area not developed before, or along the now defunct Poldice Plateway route (Sunnyvale Road).

App 1.5.3 Settlement function and characteristics

As the spread of bungalows and chalets in this period makes clear, Portreath was by 1946 essentially a holiday and residential village, with a small vestigial harbour function. The diversion of the Red River in 1933 to keep mining waste away from the beach is the clearest indication of the change from industry to tourism as the major economic activity in Portreath. As well as the coastguard and Portreath harbour, now owned by AC Reynolds & sons, Kelly's 1931 Directory lists shopkeepers, hotels, refreshment rooms, genteel retired ladies and navy men. Mariners and sailors no longer formed a significant proportion of the population. It had even become a place for literary reflection - Laurence Binyon wrote the well-known lines 'They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old' at the tower on Lighthouse Hill.

With the coming of the Second World War in 1939, the recently improved moorland on Nancekuke Common to the north of Portreath was taken over and made into an airfield, with associated defence batteries and operational buildings built elsewhere around the valley. While this temporary intrusion of a new use and new population was not unique to Portreath in the war years, the continuing use of the site as an air base well into the later 20th century added a permanent element to the character of the area.

App 1.6 Post 1946

Occasional coasters still called with loads of coal up to the 1960s but, by the end of the decade, the harbour had ceased to function commercially, and was used merely for leisure and small-scale fishing. The once extensive yards were developed for housing by the end of the 1960s, and Portreath ceased to have any industrial activity at all. By the 1990s the airbase closed, with only a minimal early-warning radar function retained.

Appendix 2: Gazetteer of archaeological sites and key historic buildings

Codes: PRN: Primary Record Number in Cornwall Sites & Monuments Record. NGR: National Grid Reference. LB: Listed Building. SM: Scheduled Monument. Date: PA = palaeolithic, ME = mesolithic, NE = neolithic, BA = bronze age, IA = iron age, RB = romano-british, EM = early medieval, MD = medieval, PM = post-medieval, PX = prehistoric undated, HX = historic undated, UX = unknown, C = century, c = approximately.

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
1		Battery (site of)	Lighthouse Hill	Battery (site of)	1782			25000
2		Bathing pool	Amy's Point	Bathing pool	Late C18			25034
3		Daymark	Lighthouse Hill	Daymark & Coastguard Lookout	Circa 1800		(County no. 914)	25002
4		Quay (site of)	Amy's Point	Quay (site of)	1713			25013
5		Battery (site of)	Battery Hill	Battery	1782			25003
				Artefact: cannon	1782			25003.1
6		Streamwork (site of)	Portreath Beach	Streamwork (site of)	1887			40652
7		Deadman's tower and steps	Portreath Harbour	Harbour Watchtower	mid C18			
8		Steps/walls/issues	Portreath Beach	Wall/steps	C18-C19			
9		Fish cellar (Site of)	Portreath Harbour	Fish cellar (site of)	1803			40647
10		Shipyards (site of)	Portreath Harbour	Shipyards (site of)	1860s +			40648
11		Limekiln (site of)	Portreath Harbour	Limekiln (site of)	Early C19 to 1967			25004
12		Harbour	Portreath Harbour	Pier, Harbour walls quays and bollards	1760, 1800-24, 1846, 1860	LB II	SW 64 NE 1/227	25012

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
13		Hayle (Portreath Branch) Railway incline	Railway Terrace	Railway Incline and bridge	1838	LB II	SW 64 NE 1/228	18001.1
14		?? Restaurant	Railway Terrace	Smithy	1841-77			40653
15		Glenfeadon Smelter (site of)	Glenfeadon	Smelting Mill (site of)	1814, closed 1825, still standing 1848			25007
16		Stamping mill (site of)	Glenfeadon	Stamping mill (site of)	Early C19, extant 1832			40649
17		Portreath to Poldice Plateway	Sunnyvale Road	Plateway	1809, closed 1880s			18011.2
18		Streamwork (site of)	Portreath	Streamwork (site of)	1841-77			40651
19		Trecarrel House	Penberthy Road	House	c.1858	LB II	SW 64 NE 1/236	
20		Milestone	Penberthy Road	Milestone	mid C19	LB II	SW 64 NE 1/237	
21		Church (site of)	St. Mary's Church	Church (site of)	1841, restored 1880, demolished 1963			
22		Methodist Chapel	Penberthy Road	Methodist Chapel	1858	LB II	SW 64 NE 1/235	
23		Glenfeadon House	Glenfeadon	House	1850s	LB II	SW 64 NE 1/232	
24		Glenfeadon Castle	Glenfeadon	Gazebo	1841-77, altered early C20	LB II	SW 64 NE 1/233	
25	1 – 8 (incl)	Glendale Villas	Penberthy Road	Coastguard Station (Houses and outbuilding)	1877-1906			
26		Reading Room	Penberthy Road	Reading Room	1877-1906			
27		Portreath Arms (former Portreath Hotel)		Public House	c.1800			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
28		Smuggler's Cottage		House (former fish cellars?)	C18			
29		Beach House		House	1877-1906			
30		1 & 2 Seafield, Sundip		Chalet	Early C20			
31		Battery House and Outbuildings	Battery Hill	House and outbuildings	Mid C19			
32		Battery and gun emplacements (site of)	Battery Hill	Battery and gun emplacements	1782 and 1939-45			
33		Speranza, Cliffdene, Beachside, Shore Edge	Battery Hill	Chalet	Early C20			
34		1 & 2, Mywaye, The Chalet, Gwyn Mergh, Glengariff	Battery Hill	Chalet	1906-46			
35		Recess in retaining wall, Mywaye	Battery Hill	Wall recess	Dated 193?			
36		Lamppost base	Battery Hill	Lamppost base	1841-77			
37		Rockville	Tregea Hill	House	1877-1906			
38		Tahilla House and Railings	Tregea Hill	House and railings	1841-77			
39		Salano, Del Ray, Buena Vista, Windy Ridge	Green Lane	Chalet	1906-46			
40		Cliff Cottage, Demonfort, Cape Horn	Tregea Hill	House (Bungalows)	1906-46			
41		Stable/outbuilding west of Basset Arms	Tregea Terrace	Stable/outbuilding	1841-77			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
42	6-19 (incl), 23-28 (incl) & Basset Arms		Tregea Terrace	Row	Late C18/early C19			
43	20 & 21		Tregea Terrace	House	1841-77			
44		Outbuildings (ruins), rear of nos. 20 & 21	Tregea Terrace	Outbuilding (ruins)	1906-46			
45	1- 4 (incl)		Tregea Terrace	House	Late C19/Early C20			
46	4	The Stores	Railway Terrace	House	1841-77			
47		Ruins of row, rear of nos. 1-3	Railway Terrace	Row (Ruins)	Late C18			
48		Buildings (site of)	Portreath Harbour	Building (site of)	1841-77			
49		Coal Yards (site of)	Portreath Harbour	Coal Yard (site of)	1841-77			
50		Store	Portreath Harbour	Store	1877-1906			
51		Store	Portreath Harbour	Store	1906-46			
52		Ore hutches (site of)	Portreath Harbour	Ore hutch (site of)	Early C19 – early C20			
53		Gull Rock & Penpier	Lighthouse Hill	House (bungalows)	1906-46			
54		Rockaway	Lighthouse Hill	House	1877-1906			
55		Gazebo, Rockaway	Lighthouse Hill	Gazebo	1877-1906			
56		Walls and Roads from harbour to Lighthouse Hill	Portreath Harbour	Wall and roads	1906-46			
57	8 & 9		Harbour Terrace	House (now houses)	Late C18			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
58	1-7 (incl)		Harbour Terrace	Row	Late C18			
59		Lamppost base	Lighthouse Hill	Lamppost base	mid C19			
60		Walled lanes and closes to rear nos. 1-5	Lighthouse Hill	Wall	Late C18/early C19			
61	1-5 (incl)		Lighthouse Hill	Terrace	1877-1906			
62		Harbour House	Penberthy Road	House	1841-77			
63		Walls and outbuildings, Harbour House	Penberthy Road	Wall and outbuildings	1841-77			
64		Carryglass	Penberthy Road	House (bungalow)	1841-77			
65		The Gables (Post Office)	Penberthy Road	House (bungalow) /Post Office	1906-46			
66		K6 Telephone Box, Post Office	Penberthy Road	K6 Telephone Box	1906-46			
67		Roselyn	Penberthy Road	House	Pre 1809			
68		Gordon Villa, Moorfield, Bracken, Cliff Haven	Sunnyvale Road	House	1906-46			
69		Bramblemoor, Tralee	Sunnyvale Road	House	1906-46			
70		Dove Cottage and Farmhouse	Sunnyvale Road	House	1809-41;1841-77			
71	1 – 4 (incl)	Sunny Corner	Sunnyvale Road	Row	1809-41;1841-77			
72	1 – 22 (incl)		Greenfield Terrace	Terrace	1841-77			
73		Trevennen	Penberthy Road	House	1841-77			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
74		Lamorna House, Greenfield Villas, Pendeen	Penberthy Road	House	1841-77			
75		1-8, and Greenfield House	Basset Terrace		1877-1906			
76		Kimberley House (with attached shop)	Penberthy Road	House and shop	1841-77			
77		Sea View & Hill View	Penberthy Road	House	1877-1906			
78		The Glen, Catheen, Cotswold, Newstead, Pemberley, Braemar, Homestead, Riverdale, Trelawney	Penberthy Road	House (bungalows)	1906-46			
79		Portreath Junior and Infant School	Penberthy Road	School	1880, enlarged 1896			
80		Field walls, Rose Villa farm	Penberthy Road	Wall	Pre 1809			
81		Rose Villa farmhouse	Penberthy Road	House	1841-77			
82		Outbuilding, Rose Villa farm	Penberthy Road	Outbuilding	1841-77			
83		Bridge over Red River	Railway Terrace	Bridge	1841-77			
84		Bridge over Red River	Baines Hill	Bridge	1809-41			
85		Bridge over Red River	Primrose Terrace	Bridge	1877-1906			
86		Glenfeadon Cottage	Glenfeadon	Lodge, now house	1841-77, altered late C20			
87	12-14 (incl)		Glenfeadon Terrace	Terrace	1877-1906			
88		Retaining wall, north side	Glenfeadon Terrace	Retaining wall	1809-41			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
89	1 – 11 (incl)		Glenfeadon Terrace	Row	1809-41			
90		Holmlea (and steps)	Glenfeadon Terrace	House (bungalow)	1906-46			
91		Glenbracken	Glenfeadon Terrace	House	1841-77			
92		Bassets Acre	Glenfeadon	House	1841-77			
93		La Barraca	Primrose Terrace	House	1809-41;1841-77			
94		Seacroft, Warwick House, Fair Winds, Sea Breezes, Primrose, Sunray, Briar Cottage, The Nook	Primrose Terrace	House	1809-41, some alterations early C20			
95		United Methodist Chapel (site of)	Primrose Terrace	Chapel (site of)	1841-77, demolished mid C20			
96		Primrose Nook, Glenmount, Woodside Cottage & no. 4, Myrtle Cottage, Treevue	Primrose Terrace	House	1841-77			
97		Lamppost base	Primrose Terrace	Lamppost base	mid C19			
98		Walled lane to Feadon	Glenfeadon	Walled lane	Pre-1809 trackway, walls ?1841-77			
99		Leat	Glenfeadon	Leat	C19			
100		Heatherley	Baines Hill	House (bungalow)	1906-46			
101		Church Hall	Penberthy Road	Church Hall	1906-46			
102		Waterfront Inn	Portreath Harbour	Public House (former fish cellars and shipyard building)	Pre 1809, altered C19 and mid C20			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Street	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
103		Seawall and yard wall	Portreath Harbour	Seawall	1809-41			
104		Anti-tank defences, Hayle Railway Incline	Railway Terrace	Anti-tank defences	1939-41			
105		Hayle Railway Incline (cutting)	Railway Terrace	Railway Incline (cutting)	1838			
106		Machine room	Portreath harbour	Machine room	1877-1906			
107		Cottages (site of)	Sunnyvale Road	Cottage (site of)	1809-41			
108		Cottages (site of)	Penberthy Road	Cottage (site of)	Pre 1809			
109		Adit mouths Wheal Mary	Portreath Beach	Adit mouths	Mid C19			
110		The Eyrie, Look-Out, Trungle, Bay Vista	Green Lane	Chalets	Early C20			
111	1-3 (incl)		Railway Terrace	Row	Late C18/early C19			
112		Limekiln (site of)	Portreath Harbour	Limekiln (site of)	Early C19			
113		Cliff Cottage and Cliff House	The Square	House	Pre 1809			
114		Bridge over Red River	Tregea Hill	Bridge	Pre 1809, altered mid C20			
115		Cottages (site of), r/o The Gables (PostOffice)	Penberthy Road	Cottage (site of)	Pre 1809			
116		Outbuilding at foot of northern access road	Portreath Harbour	Outbuilding	1877-1906			
117	1	Glendale Villas	Penberthy Road	House	Early-mid C19			



Figure 5 Portreath harbour [12] looking inland to the south west, the Hayle Railway incline [13] in the rear background



Figure 6 Glenfeadon House [23], Glenfeadon Terrace, home of the Bain family, harbour masters, merchants, ship-owners, bankers and philanthropists.



Figure 7 Penberthy Road; as settlement spread along the valley bottom in the mid-late 19th century, the houses, chapels [22] and coastguard station were laid out over old farming hamlets, parts of which still survive (centre) [117].



Figure 8 The slopes above Tregea Hill and the earliest industrial housing in Portreath (bottom) [41-42]; late 19th century houses [38] and holiday shacks [110] merge into 20th century bungalows as tourism develops.



Figure 9 The Square from the west. In the 19th century a busy area, with tramroad junctions, coal and ore yards and stores. The settlement core now presents a unique opportunity for enhancement of this extensive, wind blown road junction.



Figure 10 In great contrast is the sense of enclosure, close relation to topographical grain and the interest and quality of the built and natural environment in the historic areas of Portreath: Tregua Terrace [41-46].