

Character Area 1: Medieval commercial core

This sheet summarises the comprehensive assessments of character and regeneration opportunities in Sections 6, 7 and 8 of the report.

Character summary

Historically this is the town's primary urban area, recognised as the town centre and forming the main commercial street. The underlying topography of the area is largely of medieval origin with the main street set along the ridge of the promontory, swollen by the width of the former market place and lined with the remains of the narrow fronted medieval burgrave strips. The former market house (now Town Hall annex and Museum), set in its island location between Upper and Lower Market Streets, forms an iconic image of the town. The area has a high level of surviving historic buildings, including many prestigious three-storey town houses, some now converted for commercial use. There are a good collection of historic shop fronts, notably one important survival from the 18th century. Courts of houses, built at the back of plots, set at right angles to the street and reached by open ways are a distinctive feature of this area.

Issues

- The area's urban pre-eminence has waned
- The area is isolated from the peripheral commercial and waterfront areas
- Backs of buildings and burgrave plots are highly visible throughout the town
- The historic grain of the medieval burgrave strips has been compromised by 20th century development
- Shop fronts are a mix of high quality traditional frontages and incongruous late 20th century examples. There are a relatively high number of underused and empty shop units
- There are a number of inappropriate 20th century buildings that detract from the quality of the streetscape
- Elements of the public realm fail to match the high quality of the surrounding historic environment
- Public areas around the Town Hall are under valued and detract from the importance of this iconic building
- Traffic and related signage and road markings have a negative impact on the pedestrian experience of this area

Regeneration opportunities

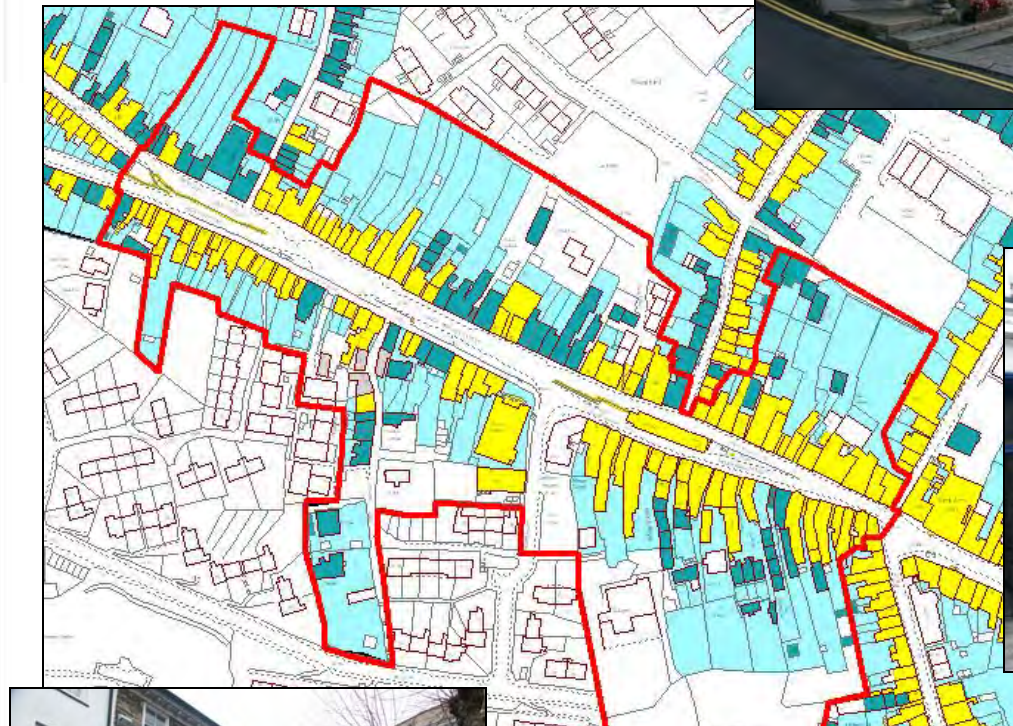
- Reassert the urban primacy of this area
- Strengthen the connection with the peripheral commercial and waterfront areas
- Ensure sensitive and appropriate treatment of rear and side elevations and of back garden plots
- Respect the surviving medieval urban grain and historic build line
- Celebrate, repair and maintain the surviving historic shop fronts and replace inappropriate late 20th century examples
- When opportunities arise, address the negative impact of unsympathetic 20th century buildings in the area
- Ensure that all new build is sympathetic to its surroundings and reflects the high quality of the historic fabric
- Reduce streetscape clutter, strongly manage the public realm and ensure that any new additions are of the highest quality
- Maintain surviving historic railings, when reinstating railings use historic evidence for information about style and detailing and use historic examples as sources of inspiration to improve inappropriate modern railing schemes
- Better value and enhance the public spaces at either side of the Town Hall
- Reduce the negative impact of traffic, traffic related signage and road markings in this area and increase pedestrian priority



Medieval market place – Upper and Lower Market Streets



Town Hall and Town Museum. An important landmark building, visible throughout Penryn. Granite windows on side elevations date from the 17th century. Building extensively remodelled in the 18th and 19th centuries.



Historic shop fronts of the 18th century (above) and 19th century are an important part of the special character of this area



Teetotal Hall, 1852. Impressive granite architecture



Impressive town houses of the 18th and 19th century are a feature of the area. Now mostly converted for commercial uses and multiple occupancy



Public areas around the Town Hall are currently under exploited and elements of the streetscape fail to match the high quality of the surrounding historic environment

Character area 1:

Medieval Commercial Core

- Character Area boundary
- Scheduled Monument
- Listed Building
- Other Significant Building
- Historic Plot

