Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative
POLGOOTH

(St Austell Area)

2004

CORNWALL INDUSTRIAL SETTLEMENTS INITIATIVE
Conservation Area Partnership

Name:	Polgooth	**Study Area:**	St Austell Valley
Council:	Restormel Borough Council	**NGR:**	SW 99548 50464 (centre)
Location:	South-east Cornwall, 1 mile south-west of St Austell	**Existing CA?**	No
Main period of industrial settlement growth:	Pre 1809; 1809-41	**Main industry:**	Tin, copper mining and elvan quarry

Industrial history and significance

Polgooth developed relatively early. Little survives from the early years of the mine in the 16th- 18th centuries when Polgooth was associated with some of the major county families and prominent engineers. This said, there is a good level of survival from the early nineteenth century in the form of workers cottages, the Inn, Count House and the intricate street patterns and leats developed in association with the mine. One of the most enduring legacies of the settlement's industrial past, however, comes not from the mine but the quarry to the south of the settlement which provided the material for the majority of Polgooth's buildings.

Polgooth is a classic type of early industrial settlement, an uncoordinated scatter of smallholdings on the edge of common land divided between the two parishes of St Mewan and St Ewe (in fact three if the mine area outside the settlement within St Austell is included). Cottages were fitted in and amongst still-working or recently finished mines and processing sites, all set on the no-man's land of waste, some distance from their respective churchtowns, in land shared by two or three large landowners, often in dispute over overall control of the area. Services, institutions and crafts that might have been expected to develop in the village were located elsewhere in less marginal (in the sense of being on the edge of territories of control) and disputed settlement centres.

Other comments

During the 1970s the village developed as a dormitory settlement (mainly for St Austell) and the scale of large, detached housing has resulted in a strong suburban character developing on the western approached of the village. However, despite a high degree of modernisation, alterations and infill the historic core of the settlement still survives.

Recommendations

Historic areas

- Designate a Conservation Area
- Prepare a full Conservation Area appraisal
- Designation of Open Areas of Significance or similar designations together with management and enhancement proposals
- Article 4 Direction to control alteration and partial demolition of walls in CA
- Article 4 Direction to control PD on single dwelling houses and alteration and partial demolition of small buildings in CA

Historic buildings

- Revise Statutory List.

- Prepare list of locally significant buildings

Policy and management
- A full survey of archaeological potential
- Proposals affecting areas of derelict land to be based on a thorough understanding of the unique historical and archaeological importance of the sites
- Limit or restrict development in the outskirts
- Recognise back-land areas and rear lanes as an important aspect of Polgooth's character
- Further develop interpretation of the village, and other promotional initiatives
- Further study to promote Polgooth's history.
- Site-specific design guidance for the village
- Full survey of existing trees and ornamental landscapes with appropriate protection measures
- Restoration/enhancement schemes to enhance some of Polgooth's important focal points

Conservation Area Partnership

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Bridget Gillard, Historic Environment Service

and

The Cahill Partnership

2004

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Front cover illustration: Polgooth from the air (HES – F13/P13)

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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 (Historic Environment Service, CCC)
CCC	Cornwall County Council
CISI	Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative
GPDO	General Permitted Development Order
HES	Historic Environment Service, 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)
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organisation
WHS	World Heritage Site
[1]	Site number on Figure 4 and in the gazetteer (Appendix)

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.

The Cornish Mining World Heritage Site Bid is being prepared for submission to UNESCO by February 2005 (for inscription in June 2006). 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 associated industries. All mining settlements are of significance to the World Heritage Site Bid - those that fall in 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.

1.2   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 or for District Conservation Officers).

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 10.1) 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) and video 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

Polgooth was assessed as part of CISI during October 2003

2 Location and setting

2.1 Geographical location

Polgooth is situated just off the A391, 1 mile south-west of St Austell and 8 miles east of Truro, in the Borough of Restormel and at the meeting point of the parishes of St Mewan (in which most of the village lies), St Ewe and St Austell.

2.2 Landscape setting

Polgooth lies on the western side of a river valley (Tregongeeves) running approximately north-south, a tributary of the St Austell River which flows down to the sea at Pentewan about 3 miles to the south. The settlement itself straddles two little tributary west-east flowing streams in deep, enclosed and tree-girt valleys. The streams now flow mainly through leats and culverts and are separated by a ridge of open green land – part of Polgooth Mine - much of it infilled in the late 20th century with building waste, and turned into community playing fields. The main part of the village, Fore Street, lies in the south valley, the northern part (north of Trelowth Road and around Stoney Lane) is much more of a scatter of old houses set among twisting lanes and twisting streams, with a third focus around Lower Tregongeeves bridge in the main valley. The land rises immediately around the village to the north, south and west forming a bowl.

Beyond the village the countryside is mainly agricultural, although this disguises extensive ancient mining remains, except to the east and north-east where, on the other side of the main valley, the landscape was more recently heavily worked. Here the land rises steeply to a hill with extensive old mine workings, rough grazing and tree cover, separating Polgooth from the St Austell River valley and the outskirts of St Austell, with the china-clay country lying more distantly to the north.

The current size, cohesion and density of the village is a creation entirely of the mid-late 20th century; before this date, Polgooth was, apart from the small concentration around Fore Street, a widely scattered, small settlement set amongst extensive mine remains.

3 History and physical development

This section should be read in conjunction with the mapped historical development in Figure 2.

3.1 Pre-1809

3.1.1 Economic activity

'Polgooth, one of the richest and largest tin mines in the county, if not in the world' – Rev W G Maton, late 18th Century.

Polgooth mine was active as early as the sixteenth century, initially in the form of a number of stream works and shallow lode-back works; recorded names include St Margaret's, Wheal an Crane, St Martyn's, Poldice, Van Vean and Boskellyn, which appeared in a 1593 list of 'tyn works in Mulvera Ball'. These mines were all part of the Polgooth sett, owned by Peter Edgcumbe in association with a number of prominent Cornish families, eventually including the Arundell family. The mine was productive from the start and by 1546 a blowing house had been erected in St Austell to meet its needs – indeed tradition holds that the rise of St Austell was in large measure due to Polgooth: *'St. Austell was described as a poor village. It first rose to importance from its vicinity to Polgooth, one of the oldest tin mines in the county, and from the traffic arising from numerous tin streams, both in the parish and in the locality.'* Lake, Vol. 3, 1870.

The mine continued to grow, by 1650 there were 24 separate mines in the Polgooth area (as well as other celebrated early mines nearby, such as the Great Hewas Mine to the west), and its reputation spread beyond Cornwall. Celia Fiennes, visiting the county in 1695, observed *'at least twenty mines all in sight which employs a great many people at work, almost night and day'*. By around 1720

the Cornish historian Tonkin described Polgooth as *'the richest work this day in England or, I believe, that ever was in this kingdom….and the Adventurers have this present year got clear out of the said work £20,000 sterling'*. By 1727 Polgooth had one of only five Newcomen engines in Cornwall and the mine was producing 250-350 tons of black tin per year. In 1745 however the price of tin fell forcing the mine to close until 1783 when it was reopened by a new company, which included the Quaker, Edward Fox, and Charles Rashleigh of Menabilly, who had been granted the lease from Lord Arundel. The company ordered a new pumping engine by Boulton and Watt (James Watt was reputed to be living in Polgooth at this time and they were both to become Adventurers), and by 1800 there were more than 1,000 people employed at Polgooth. The success of the mine was alluded to by Lipscomb who noted in 1799 that *'the profits are immense, the labour of getting out the ore being so inconsiderable'*. Charles Rashleigh employed the profits raised by the mine to build a new harbour at Charlestown, and the tin was transported from Polgooth to the harbour by carts.

In 1804 when the lease came up for renewal a dispute broke out between Rashleigh and Lord Arundel - Rashleigh wished to build a new blowing house, but this was opposed by Arundel who held shares in the existing blowing house in St Austell. The dispute turned violent and the pumps were damaged resulting in the partial flooding of the mine. Some ore was extracted from the upper levels but the mine was forced to close in 1810 as the company's recent disputes made it unattractive to prospective shareholders. Overall however the company made a profit of over £100,000.

3.1.2   Extent of settlement

There is much suggestive evidence in the surrounding landscape of prehistoric/Iron Age settlement in and around Polgooth - remains in a field to the south-east of the modern settlement could be a round, and a large enclosure stands on Treloweth Common to the south-west.

The first recorded evidence however refers to the settlement of Polgoyth in 1502. The name derives from 'pol' for pool (or more likely [mine-] pit) and goth for 'goose'; 'pol' is found in many other early mine names in Cornwall – Poldice, Polberrow, Polglaze, Pool. The early mine and settlement were inextricably linked, indeed the 1809 map refers to the settlement as Polgooth Mine, Polgooth itself being marked as the settlement to the south now known as Little Polgooth.

The main area of the early workings seems to have been on the common waste between the two streams and along the valley bottoms themselves – the present day Fore Street, the lane leading to Treloweth Common, the area leading to and around Polgooth Inn, and, to the north, around the stream running through the modern Springfield Close and Stoney Lane area.

The proximity of the settlement to the mines, and to the streams along which there were extensive stamping mills, resulted in structures being demolished as the mine expanded, so that there is little evidence surviving of settlement before the late 18th century. Indeed, the process continued in parts of the area into the 19th century; Tyecoombe, along Tyeshute Lane south-west of Fore Street, was shown as both a settlement and mining area on the 1809 map leading up to Treloweth Common; by 1880 it was the site of abandoned shafts and dumps, but no buildings of any kind survive, and the place-name has disappeared.

By the late 18th/early 19th centuries, the main mine workings had moved to the north, south and east of the valleys on the areas of higher common land - leaving the sheltered valley bottoms free for settlement, and free from the threat of further destruction. On the outer edges of the core areas were a scatter of smallholdings, all of which are now within the village area, and which were clearly small enclosures from the extensive open commons.

Polgooth is indeed a classic form for an early industrial settlement, an uncoordinated scatter of cottages and smallholdings fitted in and amongst still-working or recently finished mines all set

on the no-man's land of common waste, some distance from their respective churchtowns, in land shared by two or three large landowners, often in dispute over overall control of the area..

Development was mainly in the form of housing, we know that in 1801 there were 780 living in the parish of St Mewan (and this does not include the sizeable part of the village that was in St Ewe parish) and, although workers must have come from a wide area, due to the size of the mine workforce it seems likely a great number of these were living in Polgooth, probably in multiple occupancy houses and lodgings – the number of houses here was never very great for the size of the working population. At this stage it was unlikely that anyone lived in the community who was not directly involved with the mine. It is not always clear whether buildings shown on early maps are industrial or residential, there was probably always a degree of shared function, as in the (late 18th century?) Counthouse – even the Polgooth Inn is said to have acted as a Counting House in the 17th century.

Although John Wesley visited the village in 1755, early Nonconformist worship must have taken place either outside or in a domestic building. The villagers would have travelled to St Mewan or St Ewe for Anglican worship (although St Ewe seems not to have played as significant a role in the village as St Mewan).

3.2   1809-1841

3.2.1   Economic activity

This period saw the second major period of production at Polgooth. In 1818 the mine was reopened under John Taylor, a mining engineer who had developed a number of mines including the hugely successful consolidated mines at St Day. He and his sons were the mineral agents for the Duchy of Cornwall. There were seven engines for pumping, winding and stamping and by 1838 the mine was employing 202 people - 141 men, 10 women 51 children. During this period it was the third largest producer of tin in Cornwall with 252 tons of black tin excavated in 1837. This golden age was to come to an end in 1842 due to the slump in tin prices and the mine was then abandoned.

On the hillside to the west of the village a new mine known as South Polgooth opened in 1836. To begin with it employed 136 people and produced copper, tin, arsenic, wolfram and zinc, but only in small quantities.

The exporting of the product was improved during this period with the building of the Pentewan to St Austell narrow gauge mineral railway. Although the line did not directly connect with Polgooth there was a siding at London Apprentice to the east of the village where the goods could join the line before being shipped out of Pentewan. Similarly coal could be more easily imported into the village from the coast.

3.2.2   Extent of settlement

During this period Polgooth developed from a mine with associated housing into a community with services. The main mine was still situated in the heart of the settlement, and around it the existing groups of rows and smallholdings along Fore Street and Trelowth Road expanded slightly, but by-and-large there must have been sufficient working population already established in the area to service the mines. The major area of growth, however, was around Lower Tregongeeves bridge where a completely new hamlet came into being at this time.

The practical effects of the division between St Mewan and St Ewe are hard to discern, but the lane running south of and parallel to Fore Street (by Whitegate farm) does seem to have had a separate existence and character (with farms and smallholdings) to the tightly built-up cottages and commercial properties of Fore Street even at this date.

There was a smithy on the northern side of the mine and a Wesleyan Meeting House. The extensive workings of the mine are clearly marked on the exceptionally well-annotated St Mewan and St Ewe Tithe Maps, as are the extensive leats, stamps, water wheels, engine houses,

boundary stones and posts, Account House etc. The central complex of buildings, north and east of the standing Counthouse through which the public roads passed and separating the two halves of the village, formed an imposing group encompassing every kind of workshop, craft and trade. The large new Polgooth Inn was built on the site of the old count house, which would have provided accommodation for visiting mine agents.

3.3   1841-1880

3.3.1   Economic activity

In 1845 the mine reopened again under a new company which began by investing in new engines including an 80 inch pump capable of driving a battery of 120 stamps, the largest in the country. A great deal of anecdotal evidence has built up surrounding these stamps which, due to the strong Nonconformist influence in the village stopped on a Saturday night to observe the Sabbath. One resident reported *'we would hear the stamps all the time throughout the village. When they switched them off on a Saturday night we couldn't get used to the quiet'*, another recalled *'they were tired and teasy. Everyone had got so used to the thump thump pandemonium, they couldn't sleep when it was quiet'*. The mine was employing 500 people in 1847 and now producing copper in addition to tin. Between 1847 and 1850 the combined returns were £87,000. However profits began to fall and by 1853, having invested £10,000 developing a new sett, the mine was running at a loss. It closed in 1856 but reopened again with 100 people still employed in 1861, a figure which had fallen to 70 by 1870. Work continued during this period at South Polgooth, but on a very small scale.

3.3.2   Extent of settlement

'Of the once rich Polgooth mine nothing but desolation remains.' Lake, Vol. 3, 1870

The increasingly precarious fortunes of the mine resulted in a slow-down of development within the village; this matched decline in other local mines, and the populations in both St Mewan and St Ewe fell from the 1840s onwards. Very few new houses were built during this period, but a large farm at Van Vean and a small holding at Valley Mead illustrate the process by which there was a gradual change in the character of the Polgooth from industrial settlement to rural village – farmers were always the single largest group of 'tradesmen' listed under Polgooth in 19th century trade directories. But this should not be overstressed at this stage – an 1856 trade directory lists no less than three mine captains in the village. What is more surprising is that there are no tradesmen except a single carpenter, although grocers, shopkeepers, gardeners are all mentioned. This may well reflect the importance of trades done 'in house' in the great mine complex rather than by local independent craftsmen.

Some social provision increased in Polgooth at this time; the Meeting House had been enlarged as a full Methodist chapel with a new Sunday School further up the hill. However, despite the 1870 Education Act no school was provided for the children of Polgooth who had to walk to St Mewan in order to attend classes. This was a situation that never changed much, and reflects Polgooth's origins as a squatter settlement on the indeterminate edges of parochial control. Other places provided the services the community needed: the mines provided work, and probably much of the specialist crafts and trades; the churchtowns provided schools and churches; there were other non-conformist chapels in nearby hamlets; Sticker was actually the main settlement in the south of St Mewan parish, with a church (from 1877); even the post office was variously described as Sticker (Polgooth) and it is unclear exactly where it was at this time.

3.4   1880-1907

3.4.1   Economic activity

By 1894 all major activity had ceased at Polgooth mine and despite a further attempt in 1906 to rework it many of the former miners had left to find work in Australia, South Africa and

America. In 1896 an attempt was made to rework South Polgooth, with very low returns, and by 1900-1910 the mine was worked by one man and two boys, producing arsenic.

However, as the old industries began to fail, new employers came to Polgooth in the form of a cooperage on part of the old mine site to the north east of the Account House and a quarry to the south of the village (re-working lode-back and shaft mine workings). The cooperage, well known under the name of Vian and May, served the expanding china clay industry, linked to the settlement via the Pentewan railway which also imported the timber and staves from which the barrels were made. The yellow Polgooth stone (a belt of elvan pushed up between the tin bearing lodes) was used throughout the village. In addition it was used by Sir Francis Leyland Barratt for the houses in Moorland Road, St Austell between 1897-1907, for many of the larger houses in that town and the Cottage Hospital.

3.4.2 Extent of settlement

The settlement developed very little during this period and indeed the census figures show the populations of the wider parishes continued to fall. However, a few new detached houses were built and one of the houses in Fore Street was converted into a post office. The entries in Kelly's Directory in 1893 illustrate further the metamorphosis of the village away from its industrial past with the forms of employment listed including shopkeepers (Hawkes Coal merchants and store had started in the family home in 1876), farmers, butchers and market gardeners, and just a single mine captain (under St Ewe).

3.5   1907- 1947

3.5.1 Economic activity

During this period activity finally ceased at both Polgooth Mine and South Polgooth. Although limited employment was provided by picking over the surrounding spoil heaps South Polgooth closed in 1916 and all activity had ceased at Polgooth by 1929. The quarry remained active at the beginning of the century providing stone for housing projects in St Austell, but was disused by 1930. It reopened briefly to supply stone for the extension of St Austell Cottage Hospital.

Vian and May continued to run the cooperage business from the heart of the village throughout the period.

3.5.2 Extent of settlement

Although large numbers of miners had left the village to find work abroad, Polgooth had developed a strong enough community and commercial activity to maintain its population. Although only a few new buildings were constructed during this period, including Esmond Villa, built using stone from the old mine buildings, the village continued to support the pub, post office, chapel and Sunday School. In addition Kelly's Directory lists a greengrocer, shopkeeper and wheelwright working in the village. There was a definite commercial heart to the settlement around Fore Street and by the 1930s the village had its own working men's institute.

3.6   Post 1947

Due to its picturesque location and proximity to St Austell the village has more than doubled in size in recent years. Apart from a small public housing scheme in Fore Street, the majority of new housing has been in the form of detached houses and bungalows set within infill sites in the historic core, on the old mine sites and in new closes to the north and west of the old settlement. The original chapel has been demolished, and the Sunday School converted into a chapel. The post office has combined with the general store and Hawkes coal merchants maintain a presence in their old general store. The Polgooth Inn continues to operate and the working men's club is now the village hall. The eastern side of the Polgooth mine site is now a golf course.

4   Current Character (Figs 3 & 4)

4.1   General

The perception of Polgooth as an historic settlement is created as much by the intricate pattern of roads, lanes, alleyways and leats laid out in the 18th/early 19th centuries as by the survival of historic buildings, although a fairly high proportion of early buildings are still extant. The early character of the settlement where mine and housing were inextricably linked has resulted in some areas of unresolved space and these, along with a handful of converted mine buildings, indicate the settlement's industrial origins.

Many of the historic buildings have been modernised and their plots infilled with modern development, but the informal nature of the lanes and tracks stop the tide of creeping suburbanisation, evident on the outskirts of the village, from overwhelming the core. The pressure for this development has been great as Polgooth has become a favoured residential location. It is located in a deep, sheltered, well-treed valley, a surprisingly attractive location given the barrenness of some of the surrounding countryside, and not what might be expected for one of the oldest and longest-exploited industrial sites in Cornwall (and thus in Britain). It is at a convenient distance from St Austell, close to but sheltered from the main St Austell – Truro road, and convenient for the sea and the golf-courses and leisure facilities which are concentrated in the area between St Austell and Mevagissey. It clearly has reached some sort of capacity – further development on this scale will destroy the historical, archaeological, scenic and amenity value of the village.

4.2   Streetscape

In the centre of the village along Fore Street there is a strong sense of enclosure with the majority of houses built hard up against the street, and a warren of smaller lanes radiating off the main Fore Street. Only at the foot of Chapel Hill where the street line is interrupted by a gaping parking space and outside the new Polmewan flats is this sense of a tightly grained village street diminished. The streetscape outside Polmewan is further impoverished by the addition of a modern telephone box.

In its own way, the separate focus at Stoney Lane/Lower Tregongeeves is just as enclosed and inward-looking, but rather than being a village streetscape, this is (despite so much later infill) an area of twisting lanes, hedgerows, large trees and small enclosures.

The surviving historic footpaths make an important contribution to the character of the village. Many [73][74][75] were routes that miners would have taken from the surrounding countryside into the mine sites. An unusual survival, because by-passed by Trelowth Road, is the lane that runs northwest to become Springfield Close – the contrast between the ancient, enclosed, inviting track and the broad, open, suburban estate character of Springfield Close could not better express the difference between the historic character of Polgooth and the blandness of most of the modern developments. A very similar experience greets one in Stoney Lane where the ancient enclosed track suddenly becomes a close of bungalows, complete with highways-standard visibility splays and turning angles.

The track to the south of the settlement [76] led to the quarry, and although at first, like the other tracks, it appears to be a country lane, it is still possible to make out the large slabs of stone used to metal the roads to prevent the heavy stone-laden carts from sinking.

The apparent duplication of parallel lanes either side of the stream by Fore Street probably reflects the split between the two parishes; it certainly predates the development of the quarries, although the need to separate quarry traffic at a later date may have strengthened this separation.

These tracks often fade into green lanes running through mysterious areas of countryside (or are they industrial remains?), as along Tyeshute Lane, or Stony lane, and into tucked away corners of smallholdings and enclosures, as at Chapel Green.

4.3   Built environment

4.3.1   Public/ecclesiastical buildings

With the demolition of the Methodist Chapel [36] Polgooth lost one of its principal buildings. The Sunday School [35] has subsequently been converted to carry out the function of chapel but on a smaller scale. The southern façade of this building has been so altered as to present an almost modern termination to the vista up Chapel Hill, but the side elevations of Polgooth stone with cream brick soldier arches above the windows still survive. The only public building within the settlement, the Polgooth Institute [49] is of a similarly modest scale; a one storey structure whose modern render again suggests a recent rather than historic building.

4.3.2   Commercial buildings

At one time there were three grocers in the village, but now this function is carried out by the post office and general stores [45]. Situated at the heart of the settlement this building combines the local vernacular of Polgooth stone walls on the service buildings at the rear with a more formal symmetrical rendered façade. The fascia board and glazing bars of the original shop front are still in place and the domestic wing [44] to the east is crowned by a hipped tower roof with wrought iron decorations. This prominent grouping makes an important contribution to the character of the historic core and is further complemented by the adjacent Old Bakehouse [48]; another Polgooth stone building with a curved southern elevation articulated by an original first floor door to receive the flour and cast iron winch bracket. One of the other former grocers is now the coal merchant [5] but retains the original fascia and glazing bars.

The other remaining commercial premises is the Polgooth Inn [1], an imposing structure with a massive hipped slate roof, painted stone walls and original sash windows. It stands isolated from the village proper, and indeed is part of St Ewe parish rather than St Mewan like most of Polgooth. It relates more to the relict industrial landscape around it, and here are indeed suggestions that originally the building served as the count house, and it was not uncommon for building situated within mining settlements to carry out both functions.

4.3.3   Housing

The sheer volume of new build within Polgooth is dominant on the main western and northern approaches to the village. Many historic buildings in the village appear to take inspiration from these new developments rather than historic character in terms of new windows, roofs, porches, garages and concrete render, which so mask the original design of the houses they appear to be modern. Only close examination of external chimney stacks and irregular window arrangements give a clue to their historic roots. However, a large number of historic houses within the core areas are still extant, recognisable and of quality, falling into a number of different categories.

Small holdings/allotment dwellings

In addition to a sizeable farm [57] on the western side of the village there remains evidence of smaller detached cottages set within their own land where mine workers would have supplemented their income by growing their own vegetables and keeping small amounts of livestock - Brooklyn [53], St Margaret's Cottage [19], Wrentham House [16], Myrtle Cottage [50] and Island Cottage [9] appear to be of this type.

Converted mine buildings and workers' cottages

Unlike mining settlements at the eastern end of the County where workers' cottages were often situated some distance from the mine, in Polgooth the accommodation was located within the industrial site itself. The unusual design of some of the earlier cottages in Polgooth suggest they

may once have been mine buildings which were later converted to provide additional accommodation such as Halfpenny Cottage [51]. This is certainly the case with the Old Count House [38]. With its half slate hung walls of Polgooth stone, canted bay windows and porch, this still makes a strong contribution to the street and roofscape of the village. There are plenty of examples of the traditional miners' cottage row in Polgooth [51][47][41][43][8] and pairs of cottages [55][29][15] – simple flat fronted buildings of local stone with slate roofs addressing the street.

Detached buildings

As with the public buildings, much of the housing in Polgooth is medium to small scale, but there are a number of sizeable detached houses, possibly the former homes of mine captains and managers [11][23][24][40]. The majority are built of local stone but Primrose Dell [40] was faced with dressed granite blocks and the facade of Sunnymeade [23] has been rendered. Further decorative features include crested ridge tiles, coloured margin glass at the windows and terracotta finials.

4.3.4 Industrial remains

The major industrial remains are to be found on the hillside to the east of the village where it is still possible to see chimneys and engine houses amongst the trees which have grown up to form a forest. However, within the village itself are not only large areas of old mining ground [34] (and the former quarries [3, 4]), but the innumerable, and not always recorded, sites of mine shafts; one, for instance, is just to the east of the entrance to Primrose Dell [40]. There are also standing buildings which were once part of the mine - the Old Count House [38], East Rand [14] and the Engine House [10] - all now in residential use. In addition there are a number of outbuildings [37][60][61], now used as garages and stores which may once have had an industrial use.

Throughout the village can be found leats [62] [63] used to channel water to the industrial sites to drive the waterwheels and stamps; there are remains of stamps [84, 85] remaining to be fully discovered and recorded throughout the village. On the leat which runs parallel to Tyshute Lane [63] is the original sluice gear used to manipulate the flow of water.

4.3.5 Paving/street ephemera

There is very little original paving in the centre of Polgooth; the majority of historic buildings being either set within their own land or built hard up against the road. The remnants of a charming gully lined with cobblestones [64] can be found outside Esmond Villas [12], but otherwise the paving where it exists is tarmac with granite kerb stones. The local Polgooth stone is used for the bridge [65] to the north east of the settlement, but much of the street ephemera in the village - the stone trough [67], boundary stone [63], stone and rail fence [69] and bollard [68] is of granite. The original railings are still in place outside Rose Cottage [71] and the winch [72] to lift sacks up to the first floor of the Old Bakehouse survives.

4.3.6 Materials and local details

Despite the preference for granite for street ephemera (most of which was mass-produced) the historic building material of choice in Polgooth was the locally sourced elvan stone. This porous, open textured stone ranges in hue from cream and light grey through to honey and ochre. The majority of Polgooth's structures were once built of this material and indeed it was often reused when the mine buildings were pulled down. Over the years, however, the increased use of render has lessened its impact but it can still be found in the core of the settlement and on the rear elevations of many houses.

4.4 Views, Vistas and Green Space

4.4.1 Views and Vistas

Within the heart of the settlement the views are restricted by the height of the buildings and the curves of the road. However on the higher ground at Van Vean looking north it is possible to appreciate the random nature of the street pattern below from the jumble of rooftops which then climb to an horizon fringed by trees. Looking east the slopes of the major mine site which would once have been open scrub lands are now covered in mature trees. From the northern side of the village the historic core is effectively hidden. From Trelowth Road the land rises to the south and the major views are again to the tree covered slopes to the east, and from Tregongeeves Lane the land rises and curves affording only immediate views.

4.4.2 Greenery

Whilst many of the houses in the centre of the village do not have front gardens the majority of the rest of the housing in Polgooth is set amongst gardens, many with mature trees and hedges. The redundant mine sites within the village itself are now open areas of grass, a recreation ground and to the east of the settlement by the river, a grass field. This central area, while it provides a much-needed resource for the village, was in part created by the dumping of building and development waste from sites outside the area; much archaeological information and historic character has been lost; other sites in Polgooth have been levelled, infilled and tidied up, rarely with adequate archaeological record. Trees now cover the slopes of the old mine site to the east and the northern fringes of the village, and proliferate throughout the village.

5 Industrial significance

Polgooth developed relatively early compared with many industrial settlements in Cornwall whose heyday occurred in the mid nineteenth century. Sadly however nothing survives from the early years of the mine in the 16th to 18th centuries and little from the late 18th century when the village was associated with some of the major county families and prominent engineers. This said, there is a good level of survival from the early nineteenth century in the form of workers cottages, the Inn, Count House and the intricate street patterns and leats developed in association with the mine. One of the most enduring legacies of the settlement's industrial past, however, comes not from the mine but the quarry to the south of the settlement which provided the material for the majority of Polgooth's buildings.

Polgooth is a classic type of early industrial settlement, an uncoordinated scatter of smallholdings on the edge of common land divided between the two parishes of St Mewan and St Ewe (in fact three if the mine area outside the settlement within St Austell is included). Cottages were fitted in and amongst still-working or recently finished mines and processing sites, all set on the no-man's land of waste, some distance from their respective churchtowns, in land shared by two or three large landowners, often in dispute over overall control of the area. Services, institutions and crafts that might have been expected to develop in the village were located elsewhere in less marginal (in the sense of being on the edge of territories of control) and disputed settlement centres.

6 Designations

6.1 Scheduled monuments

There are no scheduled monuments.

6.2 Historic Buildings (Fig 4)

There are no listed buildings.

There is no local list

6.3 Historic Area Designations (Fig 4)

There is no conservation area.

6.4 Other designations

(All policy numbers refer to Restormel local plan)

The valley to the east of the settlement is designated a Countryside Access Corridor – Policy 17

The recreation ground is designated an Existing Formal Open Space.

The land to the east of the recreation ground is designated an Existing Informal Open Space.

The Development Envelope is tightly drawn around the existing settlement – Policy 3.

7 Current issues and forces for change

7.1 Current Issues

Although sufficient of quality and interest survives to warrant protection and enhancement, a high proportion of the buildings within Polgooth have been so extensively altered with new wall coatings, extensions, replacement windows and doors, and man-made roofs that their historic character has been compromised. Recent developments within the historic core have taken place without due acknowledgement and understanding of their sensitive settings. The building replacing the demolished chapel makes reference in its scale to the building it replaced, and yet a row of smaller buildings without the gaping empty site at the foot of the hill may have been better in keeping with the surrounding historic character than an attempt to imitate the lost structure. The same issue has arisen on the site of the Old Cooperage. The new buildings take inappropriate reference in scale from those they replaced (industrial buildings) and the Old Count House (a landmark building in the neighbourhood), but pay no reference to the true type, detail or scale of domestic buildings in the village.

The retention of the area to the east of the recreation ground as an area of open space preserves part of the original mine site from development. However, at present there are no indications to the uninformed eye as to why this area has been preserved. The process of dumping and infill which created the recreation area, whatever its community benefits, has destroyed much archaeological information and historic character; the same is true of other sites in Polgooth (the important quarry sites near the Polgooth Inn are apt to be rubbish-filled, some of the mine sites in the valley are being re-organised piecemeal; the cooperage site was destroyed with little reference now to its historic form). While these changes might be inevitable, perhaps in some cases necessary, proper recording, a proper understanding of what the significance of the sites is, and an understanding that something of value is being lost should inform all future decisions and actions on these sites.

7.2 Forces for Change

There are two further proposed designations for areas of open space – the land off Polyear Close and the land between the recreation ground and Woodgrove Park. There are also proposals for traffic calming along Trelowth Road. Although there is a fairly tightly drawn development envelope around the village there is still a certain amount of scope for development within the village itself. The presence of a post office and general stores, and the village's proximity to St Austell will ensure it remains a popular residential centre, although its lack of school will probably result in an older population.

8   Recommendations

8.1   Historic areas

Recommendation: 1   Conservation Area

Designate CA to include the whole of the settlement excluding the new estates to the west.

Reason: To recognise the areas of special architectural and historic importance in Polgooth, and to promote policies and schemes for the preservation and enhancement of those areas.

Recommendation: 2   Conservation Area Appraisal

Prepare a full and detailed conservation area appraisal to accompany CA designation.

Reason: To accord with statutory requirements and departmental policy advice, to ensure a full and adequate understanding of the special historic and architectural importance of the CA, the range of historic fabric and archaeological potential, and to establish effective parameters for management and policy proposals.

Recommendation: 3   Open Areas of Local Significance

Designation of Open Areas of Significance or similar designations to include the area of land between Trelowth Road and the river.

Reason: To manage and protect the setting of the proposed conservation area.

OALS or similar designations are an extremely important and useful policy both to contain the spread of development around settlements and to act, in effect, as a secondary layer of management and control around a conservation area, preserving the setting of such an area.

Recommendation: 4   Article 4 Directions (Walls)

Article 4 Directions to control the demolition of walls and hedges, especially for the creation of hard standings.

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

Recommendation: 5   Article 4 Directions (Buildings)

Article 4 Directions to control the demolition and alterations to individual houses; to prevent demolition of freestanding outbuildings; and to prevent the loss of such features as unlisted shop fronts, especially when now in residential use.

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

8.2   Historic buildings

A fuller understanding of the stock of historic structures in Polgooth as elsewhere in Cornwall, is urgently required – local list surveys, thematic surveys, detailed recording as part of Article 4 Directions should all be viewed not only as a first stage to Listing, but as an end in themselves, as critically important elements in the creation of policies, in prioritising action, in targeting funding strategies, and as a means of successfully managing change and promoting opportunities.

Recommendation: 6   Statutory listed building review

Review the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for the Polgooth area.

Reason: To update the statutory list to reflect changes in understanding of the historic environment, in order to preserve or enhance the special character of the buildings and the area.

The following list puts forward a range of structures that might be considered for listing - there are others not given here which on closer inspection might also be included; the intention here is to give an idea of the scale of any potential listing exercise.

The Old Count House [38]

St Margaret's Cottage [19]

Tredeagus [46]

Vale Cott, Brooklyn [53]

Myrtle [50]

Halfpenny Cottage [51]

Polgooth Inn [1]

Recommendation: 7   Non-statutory historic buildings survey (Local list)

Prepare a list of locally significant structures which contribute substantially to the character of the settlement, 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.

Reason: To ensure a full and accurate record of the historic fabric of the settlement, to strengthen existing Local Plan commitments to prevent proposals that would harm the historic heritage of the village and guide development and promote change that will preserve and enhance the character of the village.

8.3   Policy and management

Recommendation: 8   Archaeology

Undertake a full survey of archaeological potential in Polgooth with particular reference to the early streamworks in the river valley, backed up by an additional policy requiring proper recording of 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 village, and thereby preserve the special character of Polgooth.

Recommendation: 9   Derelict land

Base proposals affecting the areas of derelict land that surround and permeate Polgooth on a thorough understanding of the unique historical and archaeological importance of the sites themselves, and also of their value to the setting of Polgooth. Conserve surviving historic fabric and landscape.

Reason: To ensure that the sites retain both their historical relevance to Polgooth and Cornwall, and their own archaeological and historical integrity.

Recommendation: 10 Limit or restrict development

Further development on the outskirts should be avoided or limited in extent and, where necessary, fully integrated into the historic topography and settlement form, and ideally should be limited to those sites within the village development limit set by Restormel District Council.

Reason: To retain both the discrete identity of Polgooth and comply with existing Local Plan commitments.

Recommendation: 11 Back-land and trackways

Recognise the importance to historic character of back-land areas, tracks and lanes as an important aspect of Polgooth's character; preserve and enhance their informal qualities and important surviving buildings.

Reason: To preserve and enhance the special character of Polgooth, especially in areas unlikely to attract private investment and attention.

Recommendation: 12 Interpretation and Promotion

Although a leaflet already exists describing two walks through the village a more detailed village trail could provide further historic and architectural information. Interpretation panels could be provided in the centre of the village and around the former industrial sites.

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

Recommendation: 13 Further study

Polgooth's importance as an early industrial area merits further research. There is an active local history society producing the Polgooth Times newsletter and local people possess early photographs of the settlement. A definitive history of the mine and village would be welcomed.

Reason: To further understand the relationship between the mine and settlement.

Recommendation: 14 Design Guidance

Produce design guidance specific to the village, based on a detailed audit of materials, designs, details and character, both of standing buildings and of street paving materials.

Reason: To preserve and enhance the special character of Polgooth, and promote change that will preserve and enhance the character of the settlement.

Recommendation: 15 Trees and ornamental landscapes

Undertake a full survey of existing trees and ornamental landscapes and take protection measures where appropriate.

Reason: To ensure that the contribution made by existing trees to the townscape on both private and public land is recognised and protected where necessary

Recommendation: 16 Restoration/enhancement schemes

Concentrate restoration/enhancement schemes on some of Polgooth's important streetscapes, particularly the area of Fore Street.

Reason: To recognise and enhance the importance of focal points in the development of Polgooth's townscape.

9   References

9.1   Primary Sources

1809 OS map

1841 Tithe Map

1880 OS 25 inch map

1907 OS 25 inch map

1930 OS 25 inch map

1947 RAF air photograph

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

9.2   Publications

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Appendix: Gazetteer of archaeological sites and historic buildings

Codes: PRN: Primary Record Number in Cornwall Sites & Monuments Record. NGR: National Grid Reference. LB: Listed Building. SM: Scheduled Monument. Date: IA – iron age, RB = romano-british. C = century, c = approximately. Cons = consecutively.

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Road	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
1		Polgooth Inn	Ricketts Road	Public House	Pre-1809; rebuilt mid C19			139902
2		Polgooth Mine	Polgooth	Site of mine	1809-41			20720
3		Polgooth Mine	Polgooth	Site of mine	Pre-1809-80			
4		Polgooth Quarry	Polgooth	Site of quarry	1880-1907			20762
5		Hawkes' Coal Merchants and shop	Polgooth	Commercial premises	1880-1907			
6			Polgooth	House	1841-80			
7		Valley Mead	Polgooth	House	Pre-1809			
8		Hazel Cottage, Bellvine Cottage, Westwinds	Polgooth	House (cottage row)	1809-41			
9		Inland Cottage	Polgooth	House	pre-1809			
10		The Engine House	Polgooth	Mine building (now house)	1880-1907			
11		Old Manor House	Polgooth	House	pre-1809			
12	1-2	Esmond Villas	Trelowth road	House	1907-30			
13		The Old Cooperage	Trelowth road	Site of cooperage	1841-80			20722
14		East Rand	Polgooth	Stamping mill (now house)	1809-41			41727
15		Appletree Cottage, Hawthorn Cottage, The Barton	Lower Tregongeeves	House	1809-80			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Road	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
16		Wrentham House	Stoney Lane	House	1809-41			
17		Trevone Cottage	Stoney Lane	House	1809-41			
18		Chaumiere	Stoney Lane	House	1809-41			
19		St Margaret's Cottage	St Margarets Lane	House	1809-41			
20		Bosinver Cottage	St Margarets Lane	House	1809-41			
21		Polgooth mine (part)	Polgooth	Site of mine	1880-1907			
22		Rosemorran	St Margarets Lane	House	1880-1907			
23		Sunnymeade	Bosinver Lane	House	1880-1907			
24		Sunny Villa, April Cottage	Bosinver Lane	House	1809-41			
25		Ivy Villa	Bosinver Lane	House	pre-1809			
26		Polgooth Mine (part)	Polgooth	Site of mine	1841-80			
27		The Cottage	Polgooth	House	pre-1809			
28		Garage (former smithy), The Cottage	Polgooth	Smithy (now garage)	pre-1809			
29		Sunnyside	Polgooth	House	pre-1809			
30		Pentrieve	Trelowth Road	House	1907-30			
31		Hillside, Enmore	Trelowth Road	House	1809-41			
32		Henmone	Trelowth Road	House	1907-30			
33		Fairways	Trelowth Road	House	1930-47			
34		Polgooth Mine (part)	Trelowth Road	Site of mine	Pre-1809			
35		Methodist Church	Chapel Hill	Sunday School (now chapel)	1873			139931

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Road	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
36		Methodist Church (Site of)	Chapel Hill	Site of former chapel	1809-41			139930
37		Outbuilding f/o the Old Counthouse	Trelowth Road	Outbuilding	1841-80			
38		The Old Count House	Trelowth Road	Count House (now house)	Pre-1809			141242
39	1& 2	Hill House (r/o Old Counthouse)	Polgooth	House	1809-41			
40		Primrose Dell	Polgooth	House	pre-1809			
41	1	Whitegate Cottages	Fore Street	House	1841-80			
42	2	Whitegate Cottage	Fore Street	House	1809-41			
43		Bosken, Jubilee	Fore Street	House	1809-41			
44			Fore Street	House	1880-1907			
45		Post Office	Fore Street	Commercial premises	1809-41			
46		Tredeague	Fore Street	House	Pre-1809			
47		The Croft, Cosy Nook, Tirion	Fore Street	House (cottage row)	1841-80			
48		The Old Bakehouse	Fore Street	Bakehouse (now house)	1880-1907			
49		Village Hall	Fore Street	Hall (former working men's' institute)	c.1930			
50		Myrtle	Fore Street	House	1809-41			
51		Greenlands, Lynstead, Halfpenny Cottage	Fore Street	House	pre-1809			
52		Dalehurst	Fore Street	House	1809-41			
53		Brooklyn, Vale Cott, Brooklyn Farm Cottage	Fore Street	House	1809-41			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Road	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
54		Bossiney	Tyshute Lane	House	1809-41			
55	1-2	Riverside	Tyshute Lane	House	pre-1809			
56		Hillside, Ryn Cottage, Rose Cottage	Vanvean	House	pre-1809-80			
57		Vanvean Annex, Little Vanvean	Vanvean	House (farm buildings)	1841-80			
58		Vanvean Farm	Vanvean	House	1907-30			
59		Round	Polgooth	Round	IA, RB			20662
60		Outbuilding	Fore Street	Outbuilding	1809-41			
61		Outbuilding	Fore Street	Outbuilding	1809-41			
62		Leats	Polgooth	Leat	1809-41			
63		Leats	Polgooth	Leat	1841-80			
64		Paving by Esmond Villas	Trelowth Road	Paving (cobblestones)	1907-30			
65		Bridge	Lower Tregongeeves	Bridge	1809-41			
66		Boundary stone	Tyeshute Lane	Boundary stone	1809-41			
67		Trough	Polgooth	Trough	1809-41			
68		Bollard	Fore Street	Bollard	1841-80			
69		Fence	Polgooth	Fence (stone and rail)	1907-30			
70		Blocks	Polgooth	Blocks (stone)	1841-80			
71		Railings to Hillside	Vanvean	Railings	1841-80			
72		Winch by old bakehouse	Fore Street	Winch	1880-1907			
73		Track	Polgooth	Track	1809-41			
74		Track	Polgooth	Track	1809-41			

Ref.	Street no.	Name	Road	Site type	Period	Status	SM or LB No	PRN
75		Track	Polgooth	Track	1841-80			
76		Track	Polgooth	Track	1880-1907			
77		Chapel Green	Chapel Green	House	Pre-1809			
78		Mount Pleasant	Chapel Green	House	1880-1907			
79		Tyecombe (site of)	Tyecombe	Settlement (site of0	Pre-1809			
80		Polgooth Mine, central complex (site of)	Polgooth	Mine buildings (site of)	1809-41			
81		Shaft (site of) Polgooth Mine	Trelowth Road	Shaft (site of)	1809-41			
82		Wall and outbuildings, Polgooth Mine (and the old Cooperage)	Trelowth Road	Wall and outbuildings	1809-41			
83		Early Tin working (site of), around Polgooth Inn	Ricketts Road	Early Tin working (site of)	Pre 1809			
84		Sethor (former Mill buildings)	Stoney lane	Mill buildings (now house)	1907-30			
85		Mill buildings	Stoney lane	Mill buildings	1880-1940s			
86		Herbert Villa	Trelowth Road	House	1907-30			
87		Building r/o Herbert Villa	Stoney lane	House	1907-30			
88		Woodlyn View	Trelowth road	House	1907-46			
89		Buildings f/o Rentree	Polgooth	Outbuildings	C19			
90		Tin works, shafts and stamp mills (sites)	Polgooth	Tin works & stamps (sites)				