

St Veep Parish Design Statement

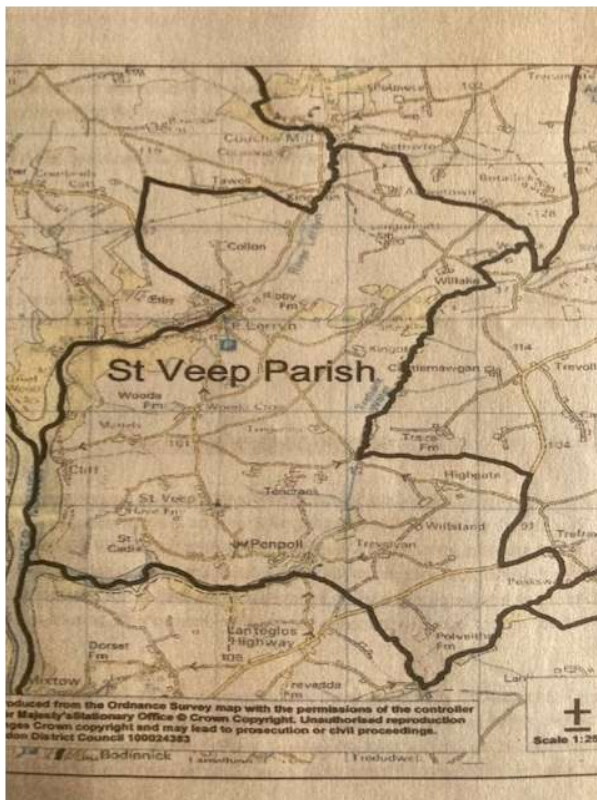


Introduction

Situated in southeast Cornwall, St Veep is a wholly rural parish, encompassing most of the village of Lerryn, the hamlets of St Veep, Penpol, Tencreek, Manely and Cliff as well as numerous agricultural settlements.

The parish is bounded on two sides by the rivers Fowey and Lerryn and the Penpol Creek. Much of the land is designated either an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ANOB) or of High Landscape Value (HLV) and Lerryn village is a Conservation Area (#49)

The character of the area has been influenced by the traditional landscapes of rural south Cornwall and the river Fowey estuary. Outlying agricultural settlements and hamlets using local materials and vernacular architecture have developed around mediaeval farmsteads throughout the parish. In Lerryn some larger properties in a range of architectural styles can be found alongside the original cottages and barns.



The purpose of this Parish Design Statement is to describe the character of St Veep Parish in more detail and to suggest guidelines that will conserve that character through the appropriate design of any new development. The guidelines supplement and add local detail to the planning policies already adopted by Cornwall Council. It is hoped that the document will be formally approved as a Supplementary Planning Document by Cornwall Council and will be used as a material consideration in determining future planning applications within the Parish.

The document has been compiled by a working party on behalf of St Veep Parish Council and agreed through consultation with the local community (see Consultation, Annex 2)

Historical background

The parish of St Veep has a rich and varied history.

Its archaeological past includes the Iron Age earthwork of the Giant's Hedge which once stretched from Lerryn to Looe and fragments of which can still be found in the parish.

Remains of medieval settlements, religious sites, mills, quarries, quays, bridges, ferry crossings and lime kilns abound throughout the area.

The first documentary evidence of the church dates to 1236, but the manors of Manely and Trevelyan were recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086.

Considerable evidence can still be found of the area's post medieval importance for water-borne commerce when sea-going ships could sail into Lerryn and the adjoining creeks with cargoes of lime and other commodities.

The personal intervention of Queen Elizabeth I secured the rebuilding of Lerryn Bridge in 1573.

There is a significant number of listed buildings and structures within the parish, a list of which can be found in Appendix 1.

Trevelyan, St Veep



Lerryn Bridge

It is the aim of this Design Statement to ensure the protection and preservation of the evidence of the Parish's diverse history and character for future generations.

The people, places and events of the past have made St Veep Parish the place we cherish today and will continue to value in the future.

St Veep parish has the remains of several lime kilns, once used for the calcination of limestone into quicklime for agriculture and construction.



Limestone was most easily transported by water and so kilns were built near local quays. Four kilns were in Lerryn, one at Bramblecombe, one at Lower Penpol and one at Cliff.

The kilns are in a varying state of repair, ranging from virtually intact to there being no remaining trace.

Lime Kiln, Lerryn

There are the remains of three water mills in the parish – at Lerryn, Kingston and Lower Penpol.

All three buildings are in a relatively sound state of repair. Indeed, two have been incorporated into dwellings. The third, at Lower Penpol, could be described as “ripe for development” and may need to have planning restrictions placed on it to preserve its integrity.

The mill at Lerryn has also operated as a silver stamping mill and a sawmill in the past.

Landscape and Natural Environment

St Veep Parish, on the east side of the Fowey River estuary, is partly surrounded by water.





The estuaries account for over a third of the parish boundary and another stretch runs along the Trebant Water River.

The Rivers Lerryn and Trebant Water flow into the estuary at Lerryn and Penpol creeks respectively and link up with their two tidal habitats. The landscape of scattered rural hamlets and traditional family farms is unspoilt by development and much of the area has changed very little since Domesday records. As a result, the area is rich in wildlife and home to many protected species. Key wildlife habitats include intertidal mudflats, riparian woodland, ancient woodland, temperate rainforest, ancient orchards, Cornish hedgerows and grazed pasture.

View downriver from Lerryn Bridge

The two creeks are County Wildlife Sites and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). Highly valued by residents and visitors for their tranquil, unspoilt nature, the creeks are protected by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation.

Climate change now threatens much nature from extreme weather events. Flooding and sewerage outflows are a concern for these precious ecosystems. In particular, the woodland areas are important to protect as they provide rich habitats for wildlife and flooding mitigation for the coastal villages.

Recreation



St Veep Parish has an extensive network of footpaths and public rights of way as well as several local green spaces which are widely used and valued by the local community. The local green spaces include two Village Greens, one at Lerryn and one at Penpol. They both run alongside the river and allow public access to the river. There are public slipways at Lerryn and Penpol, plus other points of public access to the river which are of particular importance and value to this community which the river plays a central function.

Map A shows the location and extent of these footpaths, rights of way, local green spaces and public access points to the river.



The parish has many facilities and amenities, mainly in Lerryn village, which are well used and much valued by the local community. These include a Parish Church, a Village Hall, a further community venue called the Red Store, a Village Shop and Pub, a village car park and public toilets. There is a primary school within the village which is attended by children both from within and outside the parish. There are two village greens, one in Lerryn village and one in the hamlet of Penpol. Lerryn has a community minibus which provides much needed public transport. Walking and river-based activities, such as fishing, boating, kayaking and paddleboarding are popular activities around the water-side areas, whilst field sports predominate on the agricultural land. The renowned annual

Seagull race attracts boats and competitors from far and wide.



The two community venues (the Memorial Hall and the Red Store) host a very wide range of well supported activities – including an art group, amateur dramatics, a book group, bridge, a history society, Pilates, scrabble, short mat bowls, snooker, the WI, yoga, as well as regular art and craft exhibitions, the local Produce Show and fund-raising events. A full list of organisations and activities can be found on the village website, in the Parish magazine and on the noticeboards

All these activities bring an active and vibrant community together – one of the most important and cherished characteristics of the parish.

The Memorial Hall, Lerryn

Character

The Parish is dominated by the Rivers Fowey, Lerryn and Trebant Water which run along much of its boundary. Inland, it comprises mainly open agricultural fields, intersected by narrow lanes. There is one main village, Lerryn, and numerous small hamlets and settlements.

There is a strong sense of community, and we are fortunate to have a village shop, with Post Office, a public house and a primary school which also has pre-school provision.

The local architecture is characterised by cottages and farmhouses built from local stone, some rendered and lime-washed, with slate roofs. Later styles include Victorian, Edwardian and 20th Century houses, particularly in Lerryn.

The parish is regarded as a very desirable place to live, attracting many people from outside the area to settle permanently or to buy property as a second home. A high proportion of the housing stock has been converted, extended or renovated.



View downriver from Lerryn

Bridge

The narrow lanes are bounded by high Cornish hedges that abound in wildflowers throughout the spring and summer, providing wildlife corridors and vital habitat. It is essential to leave these uncut until the birds have finished nesting and the wildflowers have set seed. In many places the verges and hedges are suffering damage because of increasingly wide vehicles and machinery, and the high volume of traffic during the holiday seasons.

Within the village of Lerryn, significant parking problems are caused because of this volume of traffic and because many of the older properties do not have off-road parking. Even the designated car park is prone to flooding during spring high tides!

In addition, the increasing volume of traffic generally, and the speed of vehicles on narrow lanes, are both issues of major concern locals. The Parish Councils of St Veep and St Winnow have managed to persuade Cornwall Council to designate Lerryn village as a 20mph restricted speed zone, but, sadly, many drivers disregard this. Concerns for road safety are ongoing.

Evolution of built environment

The settlements which comprise the parish reflect the history of the area. Smaller dwellings predominate, with several farms, larger farmhouses, and some larger properties of architectural importance.

The older, smaller buildings are mostly built along the road edge or clustered around farmhouses, and typically have rooflines reflecting the low ceilings within. They are built of local stone, some rendered and lime-washed; many with extensions and lean-tos that have been added later. Slate is the traditional roofing material. Casement windows are small and usually of simple design, though later dwellings have sash windows or larger casements.

Many of the disused barns and outbuildings within the parish have been converted into homes. House names reflect the history of these dwellings.

More modern homes are generally situated at the perimeter of the village or hamlets, thus preserving the character of the earlier settlements. These developments include two areas of affordable / social housing. Other new builds have included properties attached to farms for essential workers and having an agricultural tie.



Lerryn evolved as a bustling port with large sailing ships bringing cargoes of lime and other commodities. Evidence for this can be found in the quays, warehouses and limekilns near the riverside. The old mill and forge have been converted into dwellings. Today the village is a popular tourist spot, with visitors coming for day trips and longer stays. A significant number of village properties are now second homes, commanding high prices, yet providing employment for local people carrying out renovations and extensions. The high property prices make it virtually impossible for local young people to afford to live in their home village.

The Red Store, Lerryn

St Veep developed around the parish church, with an imposing rectory and ancillary buildings. A number of small cottages and farm buildings cluster around, with one or two more modern dwellings.



The old mill and limekilns influenced the development of Penpol, and the numerous quays were once busy with maritime trade. A thriving cider making industry added another layer of trading opportunity. Indeed, cider continues to be made in the hamlet today.

Penpol Mill

Designated Areas

A significant proportion of the parish is protected by the nationally recognised designations of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, High Landscape Value or Conservation Area (Lerryn Village), reflecting the importance of our surroundings and underlining the need for robust protection from inappropriate development.

These areas are connected by a network of rural roads, lanes, bridleways and footpaths. The roads vary from narrow leafy lanes to more frequently used routes, such as the one linking Lerryn to Lostwithiel. There are pavements only in Collan Field and along part of Lerryn Bridge. Street lighting in the car park is adequate. There is very little light pollution in the parish and the residents are keen to preserve our dark night skies.

Designation gives stronger controls over the demolition of unlisted buildings and draws attention to the special character of the settlements and their landscape setting. It is felt that areas outside the Conservation Area are also very important in preserving the character of the parish, particularly the riverside settlement pattern, and this should also be given proper protection through policies and guidelines.



Lowertown Bridge, Lerryn

Summary of the important characteristics of St Veep Parish

The main objective of this Village Design Statement is to ensure that the design of new development helps to conserve the distinctive character of the parish, which includes:

- An overall rural character with leafy narrow lanes, hedgerows, farmland, woods and tidal creeks.
- Dispersed settlements and hamlets set within a traditional rural landscape.
- Many buildings of local historic and architectural interest, with building styles and materials typical of the area.
- An extensive and undeveloped shoreline with open views and a major river estuary.
- An important network of ponds, streams and other wetlands.
- A good system of attractive and well used footpaths and bridleways.
- Many historical features of archaeological interest and value.



Design Guidelines

- Development proposals should demonstrate how siting and design have taken into consideration the local landscape character.
- Outside the village, the Parish's dispersed settlement pattern should be maintained, and any new rural buildings should be located on lower scarp slopes, below the skyline.
- Development proposals should safeguard or incorporate areas of woodland, small copses, hedgerows and Cornish hedges within their layouts where it is practicable to do so.
- New developments should reinforce and, where practicable, enhance the local distinctiveness of St Veep Parish.
- New buildings should follow a consistent design approach in the use of materials, fenestration and roofline to the building.
- Buildings and outbuildings of local historic interest should be conserved wherever possible and



original features such as window type and size, chimneys and gateways should be retained.

- Extensions should be subservient to the original building where appropriate and the overall design, including form and mass, should be in keeping with the part of the Parish in which the development takes place.

- The use of natural, sustainable and traditional materials in new buildings is encouraged.

View of Lower Penpol

- Where possible locally appropriate materials should be used such as local stone, lime mortar, render and slate.
- Materials should be chosen to complement the design of the development and to add to the quality or character of the surrounding environment.
- Earlier architectural periods or styles need not be imitated in new development proposals, but they could be the stimulus form imaginative, sustainable modern design using high quality materials.
- New buildings and extensions should be designed within the existing curtilage.
- It would be expected that replacement dwellings should reflect the special character of the locality through careful consideration of scale and height.
- A good mix of housing stock should be retained within the Parish, including a proportion of more modest houses. The joining of dwellings to form one larger property and conversion of bungalows into two storey homes should be discouraged.
- Roof heights should not be raised disproportionately in relation to the existing or surrounding dwellings.
- Traditional boundaries and entrance ways should be retained where possible and replacements designed to be sympathetic to the rural scene. The use of high close boarded fencing, imposing security gates and tarmac or impermeable driveways are discouraged.
- New technologies that help the sustainable use of energy or water are supported, but careful consideration should be given to the design of external additions, such as solar panels, to minimise any visual intrusion.
- Proposals should minimise the adverse impact on local residential amenity and should consider noise, odour and light.

- Light pollution should be minimised wherever possible
- Security lights should be located and programmed with due consideration for neighbouring properties.
- Street lighting is not appropriate; the area's dark skies support local wildlife and encourage stargazing and the appreciation and understanding of the night sky.
- Development proposals should provide integrated or well-screened bin storage and recycling facilities.
- Development proposals should include parking provision to meet national and local parking standards.
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be implemented in accordance with the SuDS hierarchy. These drainage systems should incorporate rain gardens and green roofs where it is appropriate and practicable to do so.



Lower Penpol Bridge

Recommendations

- The visual impact of power lines and transformers should be reduced where possible.
- House and landowners should be encouraged to honour their legal responsibilities to maintain ditches to enable the free dispersal of water and to trim hedges so as not to hamper the passage of traffic or pedestrians.
- Any proposed developments should take into account the guidelines contained in the Cornwall Plan.
- Areas of pasture which have been used for grazing should be retained and not taken into the domestic curtilage of a dwelling or otherwise eroded.
- The rural character of the road network should be retained, seeking opportunities for achieving this in discussion with the Highways Authority. Traffic speeds should be monitored, and action taken if necessary.
- Sustainable tourism should be supported where it sensitively safeguards heritage, the unspoilt countryside, residents' way of life and the natural environment.
- New holiday lodges, cabins, campsites, caravan sites or tourist service developments should only be approved when they are not likely to be changed to permanent residential use in the future. They should be proportionate to their surroundings and preserve the unique,

distinctive landscape setting and unspoilt views. Such developments should protect the natural environment, farmland and historic hedgerows. They should not add to the risk of flooding or increase traffic and parking problems in the parish.

Penpol Creek

