

Camelford Conservation Area Appraisal



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1 Introduction

The purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal

The purpose of this conservation area appraisal is to clearly define the special interest, character and appearance of the conservation area, and to suggest any possible amendments to its boundary. The appraisal should then inform development control decisions and policies and act as a foundation for further work on design guidance and enhancement schemes.

Scope and structure

This appraisal describes and analyses the character of the Camelford conservation area and the immediately surrounding historic environment. The appraisal will look at the historic and topographical development of the settlement, analyse its present character and identify distinct character areas. These areas will then be further analysed, problems and pressures identified and recommendations made for its future management. More detailed advice on the management of the conservation area can be found in the Camelford Conservation Area Management Plan which is designed to stand alongside this appraisal.

General identity and character

Camelford is the smallest town in North Cornwall whose population in 1998 stood at just 2,300. Despite its size there is a range of amenities one would expect to find in a larger community including schooling at primary and secondary levels, a health centre, dentist surgery, public library, museum, function hall, police and ambulance stations, a reasonable level of

shops (including a post office and banks) and good sporting and leisure facilities. Its proximity to Bodmin Moor and the North Cornwall coast means it attracts a significant number of visitors. In addition to the tourist industry and commercial premises in the town there is an industrial development on its western side and Camelford is within commutable distance of Launceston and Bodmin. There are daily bus services to Wadebridge, Launceston, Bodmin and Plymouth.

Despite the traffic problems along the A39 which bisects the town, Camelford has retained much of its historic character including a good survival of historic buildings.

Date of designation

The Conservation Area was designated in 1997, in accordance with North Cornwall District Council's policy document for the area.

The Conservation Area within the wider settlement

The present conservation area boundary includes the historic core of the town close to the river crossing – Fore Street, Chapel Street and Market Place. It extends to take in the immediate riverside setting including Enfield Park, Jackson's Meadow and the fields further south on either side of the Camel. In addition it includes the eastern and southern approaches to the town along the north side of Victoria Road and the east side of High Street.

2 Planning Context

National

In 1967 the concept of protecting areas of special merit, rather than individual buildings was first brought under legislative control with the passing of the Civil Amenities Act. Whilst listed buildings are assessed nationally with lists drawn up by the government on advice from English Heritage conservation areas are designated by local authorities. The current Act governing the designation of 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Under this Act local planning authorities are required to designate conservation areas, to keep them under review and if appropriate to designate further areas. Designation remains the principal means by which local authorities can apply conservation policies to a particular area.

Regional

Broad policies relating to the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment is currently contained in the Cornwall Structure Plan (2004). The policy emphasis is that development should respect and consolidate local character. In 2008 the Structure Plan will be replaced as part of the statutory Development Plan by the South West Regional Spatial Strategy. The contained policy approach in respect of the built and natural environment will be maintained in accordance with national guidance.

Local

The adopted North Cornwall District Local Plan (1999) contains detailed policies relating to listed buildings and conservation areas. For this reason, anyone considering making an application for consent for development or demolition within a conservation area or which would affect a listed building should consult the Local Plan. The document is available for inspection at the Council's offices and online at www.ncdc.gov.uk. Pre-application advice can also be sought from the Council's Conservation and Development Control Officers.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced changes to the planning system that will result in the North Cornwall District Local Plan replacement by a Local Development Framework. A portfolio of Development Plan Documents will set out the spatial planning strategy for North Cornwall and provided detailed development control policies including locally distinct policies relating to listed buildings and conservation areas. All documents prepared as part of the North Cornwall Local Development Framework, including the Local Development Scheme which sets the timescale for Development Plan Document preparation and adoption can be viewed at www.ncdc.gov.uk.

The saved policies of the North Cornwall District Local Plan will remain part of the statutory development plan until replaced by adopted Development Plan Documents.

3 Location and setting

Camelford is situated on the A39 midway between Wadebridge and Bude, and four miles inland from the North Cornwall coast. It is approximately 27 kilometres south-west of Launceston and the A30 and 21 kilometres north of Bodmin. The main roads to Bodmin (B3266) and Launceston meet the A39 a little out of town on its west and east sides respectively. It lies within the parish of Camelford, in the district of North Cornwall.

As the name suggests the town crosses the River Camel at its northern end. The river rises four kilometres to the north and by the time it reaches the town has become a strong body of water in a steep sided valley with a narrow floor. The river flows south towards Wadebridge along the eastern side of the town where its steep valley sides have remained largely undeveloped.

Due to its location on the side of a river valley the town is relatively sheltered in comparison to many of the other settlements in the area.



Picture 3.1 Camelford is situated in a relatively sheltered location on the side of a river valley

Bodmin Moor lies to the south east of the town and the two great tors of Brownwilly and Roughtor dominate views from the higher ground.



Picture 3.2 Historic cast iron sign indicating the direction of Rough Tor from Victoria Road

To the north and east lie the gently sloping but equally exposed hills at Candolden and Davidstow.

The flat land at the river crossing climbs up the steep valley side to the south along Fore Street the principal street in the town. As it crests the hill the street becomes High Street and continues along flatter ground. Alleys slope down to the river to the east and roads and alleys climb up to farmland to the west. To the north of the river the main road to the east, Victoria Road, climbs up a gentler slope.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

(taken from the CSUS report on Camelford by the Historic Environment Service, Cornwall County Council)

The historic landscape around Camelford is predominantly Anciently Enclosed Land, farmland first enclosed in later prehistory, reorganised in the medieval period into strip fields and then enclosed into distinctively Cornish fields, many reflecting their former strippy shapes, in the later and medieval and early post-medieval periods. The Upland Rough ground of Bodmin Moor has been pushed further away to the south-east by the nineteenth century intakes on the higher parts of Advent parish, farms like Lowermoor, Edenvale, Poldue and Roughtor. Indeed the Moor only really begins, in the sense of being open rough grassland, at Roughtor Ford.

Other intakes spread away towards Davidstow and partly encircle the concrete remains of the great World War Two airfield on Davidstow Moor.

4 Designations

Scheduled Monuments

There are no scheduled monuments

Historic Buildings

There are 21 listed buildings of which only one, Camelford House, is listed Grade II*, the rest as grade II.

There is no local list

Historic Area Designations

The historic core of the settlement lies within a conservation area

Other Designations

(All policy numbers refer to North Cornwall Local Plan adopted April 1999)

The land to the south of the settlement is designated an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) – (ENV1)

The valley of the River Camel is designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – (ENV4)

Camelford is designated an Historic Settlement – (ENV3)

To the west Bodmin Moor is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – (ENV4)

The land to the south east of the town is designated an Area of Great Historic Value (AGHV) – (ENV14, ENV15)

5 Historic and topographic development

An excellent and highly detailed history of Camelford appears in the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey carried out by the Historic Environment Service of the County Council, published in September 2005. Below is a summary of this history.

Early Origins

Early prehistoric activity took place on Bodmin Moor to the south-east of the site of the settlement and there is evidence of later prehistoric settlements in the lowland around Camelford mainly in the form of rounds – enclosed settlements. The many hamlets incorporating tre (farming estate) in their names in the vicinity suggests there were early medieval settlements in the area. The positioning of the A39 following ridges to the north of the town, and valleys to the south suggests it was an early topographical element.

Camelford was not specifically mentioned in the Domesday survey in 1086, as it formed part of the large manor of Helston, neither was it an early Christian settlement. A lan (early Christian enclosure) was built at Lanteglos around a mile south of Camelford and later replaced with a medieval church.

Camelford's earliest incarnation, therefore, would appear to be a farming hamlet based on the crossing point of a routeway across the River Camel.

Medieval

The place name Camelford was first recorded in the early thirteenth century as camm 'crooked', and alan 'river'. The English suffix ford was presumably added when the settlement developed around the

crossing point. Camelford was given to Earl Richard by his brother Henry III as part of the manor of Helston, and in 1258 Earl Richard granted the town a charter which was then confirmed by Henry in 1260. Borough status enabled the settlement to hold a weekly Friday market and an annual three day fair (14th-16th July), and a classic Cornish planted town was formed. The settlement developed with a broad trapezoidal market place at its centre (on the site of the present day Market Place) with a later market house (now the town hall). The original market place could have been larger extending south to the opeway linking Back (Chapel) Lane to Fore Street. Over the years the width of the market place has been lessened by the encroaching properties. Agriculture was the basis of the economy with the market selling livestock and produce.

In addition to the growth at the heart of the settlement a fair site was developed on land to the south on the site of the present day Clease Road car park and the grassed area in front of the North Cornwall Museum. Clease Road itself was originally a track running through the centre of the fair ground. A borough pound might have been in existence on this site as early as the medieval period.

Many planted medieval market towns had thin property strips – burgage plots – running off the main streets. The nature of the surviving thin property boundaries in Camelford, however suggest the fossilised remains of the pre-existing field system. The borough did, however have burgesses – free citizens of the borough- and in 1311 they built a chapel of ease dedicated to St Thomas the Martyr and the Blessed Virgin Mary immediately to the west of the river

crossing (at around the site of the present day entrance to Enfield Park). The building of a chapel suggests a rapid development in the population and status of the settlement. By 1434 the chapel had a chantry priest, but this only lasted until the Reformation when the chapel was desecrated. The structure however remained standing, and was used as a furze store until it was demolished in the eighteenth century. Pieces of worked stone are reputed to be incorporated into surrounding buildings.

By 1327 there were probably three mills in Camelford including a possible tucking mill (for fulling cloth) and a corn mill at the heart of the settlement on Mill Lane. The leat to the corn mill still survives as a large earthwork in the park. By 1521 the wooden bridge which had replaced the ford was in turn superseded by a stone construction leading to the market place, Fore Street and Back Street (which operated as a service lane).

Post-Medieval Camelford and the Seventeenth Century

Tudor and later commentators were unimpressed with the town Leland in the 1530s thought it a 'poore Village' and in 1602 Richard Carew described 'a market and fair (but not fair) town ...[that] steppeth little before the meanest of boroughs for store of inhabitants, or the inhabitants' store'. It was during this period however that the seeds were sown for the future development of the town. In 1552 Edward VI granted Camelford the right to return two members to Parliament. Initially members were local representatives, but increasingly wealthy patrons sort to influence the voting freeholders of Camelford by providing facilities for the town. In 1678 Sir James Smith one of the borough's MPs built a

grammar school and during the seventeenth century a number of large town houses were built by current and prospective candidates including Warmington House, Bridge House and Camelford House.

In recognition of its Royalist sympathies during the Civil War, a new charter of 1669 granted the town two further annual fairs and the right of the Corporation, Mayor and Capital Burgesses to appoint free burgesses who were entitled to vote if they paid the local taxes.

By the end of the seventeenth century Camelford had developed into a small market town and inn-town. The main route between Launceston and Bodmin (effectively the road from London to Falmouth) travelled through the centre of the settlement and as a result there were a number of inns, taverns and stables. The Masons Arms, the Liberal Club (formerly the White Hart) and the Darlington Inn could all date from the late sixteenth century. However, despite these developments Celia Fiennes found 'very indifferent accommodations' when she passed through the town in 1695.



Picture 5.1 The Liberal Club stands on the site of the late sixteenth century White Hart.

Eighteenth century

In 1716 there were around sixty houses in Camelford and during the century the buying of property for political influence escalated. The 1753 map of the borough commissioned by the Duke of Bedford shows a large number of buildings in his ownership and by the end of the century the Duke owned most of the land within the borough bounds. The poor were accommodated in almshouses built in 1709 at Trevena Walls to the south-west of the town and later in 1791 at a workhouse at Sportsman's, also to the south west.

In 1769 a turnpike was constructed over Bodmin Moor which reduced the volume of traffic and associated trade through the town. However, the Royal Mail coaches (which also carried passengers) continued. The early hostelries were joined by two coaching inns both called the King's Arms – the higher King's Arms became the Indian King and the Lower King's Arms became the Bedford Inn in 1783. In 1795 the Camelford, Wadebridge and St Columb Turnpike Trust was set up to improve and control the road and several of their granite mileposts still survive. There were three tollgates on the approach routes at Chapman's turnpike, Valley Truckle and on the site of the Countryman Hotel.



Picture 5.2 Indian King – one of the hostelries built in the eighteenth century to serve as coaching inns.

Camelford's market and location on the communication network stimulated further industries including breweries, slaughterhouses, tanneries and mills. The Borough map of 1753 shows the town had extended east of the bridge along Victoria Road and south along Fore Street and High Street. The southern development was a mix of residential and commercial buildings and several of the workshops and carriage arches still survive.

During the eighteenth century the town was an important centre for Non-conformism with John Wesley visiting and preaching a number of times between 1746-89. The first Methodist chapel was built on Chapel Street (until then known as Back Street). There was no provision for Anglican worshippers who had to travel to Lanteglos for their services.

Nineteenth century

By the end of the 18th century the voting system had grown increasingly corrupt with vote buying, election rigging and intrigue the norm. Patrons continued to try and buy the support of the voters - in 1806 the Duke

of Bedford built an additional storey on the market house allowing it to be used as a town hall (now the library).

During the 1818 election the patronage of the borough was contested between the Earl of Darlington, representing the Whigs, and the Earl of Yarmouth, the Tories. The battle for land accumulation and vote buying resulted in a win for Darlington's candidates, but was duly declared void. The rivalry continued and culminated in Darlington using his mining rights to build an adit beneath Yarmouth's land and using gunpowder to blow up the newly built houses.

The 1832 Reform Bill removed the right of the town to return two members and so the former patrons deserted Camelford, contributing to a period of decline for the town. However, despite the eventual repeal of the borough charter in 1883, Camelford still continued to maintain local function as a small market town, probably because it served such a large agricultural hinterland.

Camelford was an important local farming centre, not just a market and fair town, but also a settlement in which agricultural products were processed to add value to them. By 1811 Pearce's cloth factory was in operation, producing broad and narrow cloth, across the Camel near Outground Mill, and a yarn market adjoined the Town Hall. By the 1830s there was a slaughterhouse, a wool warehouse, three smithies, a malthouse and a bakehouse in or near the centre of town. There were even farm animals in the town centre itself, with pigsties recorded in 1841 at the Darlington Arms and in Back Street (a fine long row of them still survives (disused) on the higher slopes below the Co-op).

By 1881 the livestock market had moved from the market place to a proper auction market at the top of the hill, on the north-eastern quarter of the old Fair Ground adjacent to a wagon and carriage building shop (now the North Cornwall Museum). A slaughter house was located a little way down Chapel Street, and abattoirs stood on the east side of this street, opposite the fairly grand houses on its west side, until the mid 20th century.

The town was also still an important coaching halt on the Launceston road and in 1865 the Corporation set back the road frontage of the Darlington Arms and rebuilt some of the cottages uphill from it (on the west side of the street) further from the road. Street lights had been installed by the 1850s, and many of Camelford's shops and public buildings date from the mid and late 19th century. Many of the more substantial town houses also date from this period on Chapel Street, Trefrew Lane, and infilling on High Street, Victoria Road and College Road.

That Camelford also served as a local administrative centre is confirmed not only by it being the centre of a Rural District, but also by the ring of public institutions established either near or beyond the developed periphery of the town through the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th: the Camelford Union Workhouse at Sportsman's in 1858; the Elementary School at the Clease in 1843; a Police Station near the top of Fore Street before 1881; the new school in College Road in 1894; and a Drill Hall at the Clease before 1907.

Non-conformity continued to flourish in the town - in 1810 a new Methodist Chapel was built on Back Street, and was later joined by a Bible Christian Chapel on Victoria

Road and in 1837 a prominent chapel on the eastern side of Market Place. In 1854 the Elementary School was licensed for divine service to minister to the Anglican community.

Early tourists were by the mid-19th century beginning to use Camelford as a base for exploring the Moors, including Roughtor, Brown Willy and the Devil's Jump. The town itself, however, was still looked down upon by most topographical writers; for example Mrs Craik in 1884 called it 'a very respectable, commonplace little town, much like other country towns; the same genteel linendrapers' and un-genteel ironmongers' shops; the same old-established commercial inn, and a few ugly, but solid looking private houses, with their faces to the street and their backs nestled in gardens and fields....We let our horses rest, but we ourselves felt not the slightest wish to rest at Camelford.'

In 1893 the London and South Western Railway finally arrived at Camelford, en route from Launceston to Padstow. This late date and the station's distant location (nearly two kilometres to the north) reduced the railway's impact compared to other towns. Nevertheless, it still brought the town a period of modest growth and the improved availability of imported materials such as red bricks and clay ridge tiles.

Twentieth century

During the first three-quarters of the 20th century there was limited growth and only piecemeal updating and improving of premises before a marked increase in activity during the last quarter of the century.

Some shop fronts were renewed, though a good number of Victorian and Edwardian ones remain, and a few buildings had wholly new facades installed, for example 29 Market Place with its red brick ground floor and pebble dashed first floor and scalloped parapet, an odd but important modern building in an otherwise quite conservative set of shops and offices.

By 1907 the Camelford Rural District Council had installed a Sewage Works close to the Camel below High Street (where the more modern works still lie). A small park to the west of the Camel upstream from the bridge was presented to the town in 1922 by local tailor Albert Tingcombe and named Enfield Park from the town in which he had spent most of his working life. It replaced the town's gas works.

In 1937-8 St Thomas Church (designed by Sir Charles Nicholson) was constructed in a field to the north-east of the town. Camelford's bridge was replaced by a simple modern structure in 1957 following a series of serious floods caused by the small opening being blocked by trees and branches.

Throughout much of the 20th century Camelford continued to perform its traditional role as not only a market and commercial centre, but also a supplier of services to a rural population. Many village smithies, carpenters' shops and wheelwrights were closing, drawing those who required their products to towns like Camelford. The Back Street abattoirs were joined by the Victoria Road cheese factory (now Sleeps) and there were small factories and workshops in Mill Lane, High Street, Chapel Street and down the lower opeways by the riverside. The inns continued to

obtain reasonable trade from the highway and small hotels serving the modest tourist trade came and went.

In the last twenty-five years the town has expanded significantly, with new housing estates to the south and west of the medieval town and also to the west of Victoria Road. Most new development has been residential, both public and private, but has also included the relocation of Sir James Smith School to the western side of the town in 1962 and the construction of a small industrial estate to the south of the town. With this expansion the population rose: in 1971 there were 1525 inhabitants; by 1998 this figure had risen by over 50% to 2300, and the number continues to grow.

In 1988 the town suffered an accidental, but serious water-poisoning incident (at the nearby Lowermoor treatment works); attendant adverse publicity led to a perceived blighting of the good name of Camelford.

Proposals for a bypass road began to dominate plans for the future of the town - the deleterious effect of motor vehicles on the town centre having been noted from as early as the 1930s and John Betjeman in 1964 confirming that 'motor traffic today turns the narrow street into a hell of noise'. Betjeman went on to suggest that most of the fabric of the medieval town survived: 'From the long gardens, survivals of medieval strip cultivation...one can get more idea of what the old borough once was like. The curve of the road through the town and the little square by the Town Hall show that if only Camelford was by-passed, it would be a very pleasant and more prosperous old town.'

In the 1990s the bypass was part of a wider DETR Road Programme with the Highways Agency announcing their preferred eastern route in 1994. However, following budget cuts and a change in road policy this scheme was shelved.

In 1967 the livestock market was transferred to Hallworthy, marking the effective end of the town as a market centre. However, Camelford continues to serve as a shopping and social centre for a large agricultural hinterland stretching from the north coast to Laneast and St Breward.

Present Day Camelford

The town continues to expand with building programs taking place to the north-east of the town (off Victoria Road) and to the south (towards Valley Truckle). The bypass issue continues to dominate strategic plans, with a favoured route for a distributor road now established to the west of the town. This may lead to a significant increase in the development envelope of the town and enable further employment-related land use in the form of industrial estate units.

The town is looking for ways to regenerate itself and has been identified, with Delabole and its hinterlands, as a Market and Coastal Town. A 'Health Check' has been carried out with schemes expected to flow from this. The town has also secured a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme to address some of the built environment issues visible within the town; this is concentrating attention on a number of key target buildings, the opeways and the riverside walk.

6 Archaeological potential

There are no scheduled monuments in Camelford but archaeology is potentially a rich asset for the town. There is much about the town's history that is obscure and archaeology is the only way in which certain key aspects of its historic development can be better understood.

Archaeology does not refer solely to buried remains. Information on the historical sequences embodied in standing buildings and other above ground features could be extremely valuable and a building survey of the town would be likely to yield significant new information. Opportunities for investigation and recording should be sought when buildings are refurbished or undergo substantial alteration.

There may be some archaeological potential in waterlogged features in the riverside area around St Thomas's: the lowest levels may contain organic remains preserved in the waterlogged ground.

Archaeological remains are an important and non-renewable resource and as such are protected by national and local planning legislation. One component of future investigation of both buried archaeological remains and standing buildings may be through more extensive targeted implementation of PPG15 and PPG 16 legislation as part of the development control process.

7 Present settlement character

The following overview of the general character of Camelford is taken from the CSUS report on Camelford produced by the Historic Environment Service at Cornwall County Council.

Topography and settlement form

Camelford depends on its location and topography for its existence, name and form. The medieval town was established immediately west of the ford across the Camel, the market place in a narrow flat ham beside the river and the main streets on the slopes running uphill to the south from this.

Camelford's streets are flaring threads crossed by a webbing of opeways to form a long narrow skein laid diagonally over those slopes. Fore Street and Back Street climb their steepest part and run into the old fairground (The Clease) when they have crested the rise. Fore Street continues along the top of the Camel's valley side as High Street. Other opeways slope east down to the river and lanes climb up west to breezy farmland.



Picture 7.1 An opeway connecting Chapel Street to Fore Street.

Across the Camel, the main northern street, Victoria Road, runs up a gentle side valley slope. Side streets here, Trefrew Road and College Roads have the character of country lanes.

The town's commercial centre is still focussed on the old market place and most of the remainder is residential, the largest and oldest town houses being closest to the centre, terraces, rows and cottages towards its edges.

An effect of the town being laid across rolling slopes is that it is difficult to see the entire historic town from any one spot, either from within it or from beyond it. This makes it seem almost village like.

Standing historic fabric

People passing through Camelford generally do so fairly slowly and as they look around they will notice that the town has numerous attractive historic buildings, and relatively little modern development at its heart, compared with many other Cornish towns. Should they walk around the historic core of the town, they will find good quality and wide variety in its public buildings, shops, dwellings, outhouses, spaces, opeways, and lanes.

Camelford has no set pieces to match Truro's Lemon Street or Launceston's Castle Street. Instead there are fairly haphazard juxtapositions of elegant townhouses with modest buildings, and public buildings intermingled with shops and dwellings, an effect that is both dynamic and stimulating. It reflects not only considerable time depth in the town's development (extant buildings date from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries), but also an intermixing of landholding, which had its origins in the strip fields of medieval Camelford, and which prevented landlords developing whole streets.

Losses in recent decades have largely been confined to replacements of some shop fronts, and house windows, doors, wall facings and roofs. Some buildings (dwellings, shops and workshops, including an important smithy) were removed from the upper eastern side of Fore Street and others uphill of the Sleep's building in Victoria Road.

Individual buildings are dealt with in more detail below in Section 7, on the Character Areas; the following introduces some of the more significant buildings and features.

As in many Cornish towns, public buildings are scattered across the town, neither gathered only at its centre, nor entirely in a ring around it.

- Camelford's central landmark building is the post-medieval market house, now the town's library. In 1806 it was given a first floor and a green-painted timber cupola topped with a camel weather vane.
- Remains of the 1311 bridge-side chapel of St Thomas were finally removed in the late nineteenth century. A neat greenstone and slate replacement Church of St Thomas of Canterbury was built in 1937-8 in the field uphill from Camelford House.
- The architectural merit of a post-war medical centre constructed uphill from the new church may be limited, but the building has become a local landmark.
- Before 1881 a Police Station opened near the top of Fore Street. It was moved south to the former Volunteer Inn in High Street by 1907.
- The 1810 Wesleyan chapel and adjacent Sunday School in Back/Chapel Street have both been converted to dwellings. A dramatic Free United Methodist church in Market Place was built in 1837 with gabled porch and Gothic doors and windows. The hipped roofed early Victorian Bible Christian Chapel and adjacent Sunday School were nicely integrated into the row set back from Victoria Road.



Picture 7.2 The former Wesleyan Chapel in Chapel Street dates from 1810 and has been converted into a house.

Camelford has a fine collection of former and extant public houses, relics of its days as an important coaching town on the main road through Cornwall. They are all on the main through road (Victoria Road, Market Place and Fore Street).

- The slate clad and L-shaped Darlington Inn may have some sixteenth century fabric although there has been some good quality late twentieth century restoration of this building after a damaging fire.
- The Mason's Arms, with its irregular fenestration over three storeys and its great chimney stack, may also be sixteenth century in origin. The stables to its north are later.
- Camelford House, with its symmetrical five-window front, was probably once another coaching inn. It is seventeenth

century with twentieth century alterations.

- The late eighteenth century Indian King is set perpendicularly to Fore Street, its principal rooms and entrance on the first floor.
- The Liberal Club, on the west side of Market Place, originated as an inn.
- The Western Inn (now no.57 High Street) and the Volunteer Inn (lost to the late Victorian Police Station) were at the south end of town.
- Sunnyside, now the Countryman, was a late Victorian hotel in Victoria Road.



Picture 7.3 The Countryman was originally a late Victorian Hotel.

Shops are largely in Market Place and the lower part of Fore Street. Again they are varied and generally well preserved. Shop fronts, the elements of such buildings most susceptible to changes in presentation have always been the most vulnerable features and there are no very early fronts surviving. However, there are several good shop fronts from the later nineteenth and early to mid twentieth centuries (egs. nos. 12, 17, 19, 20, 23, 25, 27, and 28B Market Place; nos. 3, 7, 24 and 26 Fore Street; no. 35 High Street).

- A pair of apparently eighteenth century shops at nos. 8 and 10 Market Place.

More low eighteenth century shops on the other side of Market Place, downhill from the Mason's Arms and uphill from the chapel.

- The eighteenth century shop at no.9 Fore Street has a mix of slate and stucco coverings and fairly flimsy timber-framed upper floors.



Picture 7.4 No. 9 Fore Street dates from the eighteenth century.

- A group of three two-and-half-storey nineteenth century shops with dormer windows on the east side of Market Place include the impressive War Memorial Institute and the modernist front of no.29, next door.



Picture 7.5 The nineteenth century War Memorial Institute, Market Place.

- There are simple three-storeyed eighteenth and nineteenth century shops with rooms over on the lower west side of Fore Street.
- The early twentieth century Lloyds bank further up Fore Street has its door set in a pedimented bay.

Dwellings are again varied and include some of north Cornwall's finest town houses together with some locally important rows and terraces.

- There are excellent seventeenth century town houses, most notably Warmington House and its immediate uphill neighbour, no. 34 Market Place. Camelford House is also seventeenth century.
- Another good town house is Bridge House, mid seventeenth century, but reworked in the eighteenth century, whose beautiful north front has a left of centre door with fine Palladian hood.
- Bush House, one of Camelford's finest eighteenth century town houses, has five floors. Its finely dressed ashlar local stone façade has stringcourses and flat arches over openings. On the other side of Fore Street, at no.18, is a smaller eighteenth century

townhouse whose ashlar front with stringcourses and flat arches, gives a finish very similar to Bush House.

- Tregarr, a large Victorian townhouse has a hipped roof, incised stucco front, and a cellar opening onto Back/Chapel Street.
- Trefrew and College Roads have fairly substantial late Victorian and Edwardian semi-detached houses and villas looking out across Camelford.
- Some of the cottages in the upper part of Back/Chapel Street and on High Street are sixteenth or seventeenth century.
- In College Road are a number of eighteenth and nineteenth century cottages.
- Most of Victoria Road's fine row of cottages are mid to late nineteenth century. They are a mix of double and single fronted.

A feature of Camelford is the diversity (and visibility) of outhouses, rear yards, and service buildings. Many of the latter (abattoirs, mills, smithies etc) reflected the importance of the town as an agricultural market centre offering a range of rural services. Most are nineteenth century, but some, especially those along Back Street, may be earlier.

- Former mill building on the north side of Mill Lane (probably eighteenth or nineteenth century rebuild of a medieval one).
- Victorian coachworks at Clease, now the North Cornwall Museum, and other coachworks, workshops, yards and stores in High Street.



Picture 7.6 The former Victorian coachworks at Clease.

- By 1881 a cattle market was in place on the former fairground. It was closed in 1967, but much of its infrastructure survives.
- Service buildings of a variety of dates (seventeenth to twentieth century), sizes (one and two storey) and functions (barns, slaughter houses, stores and garages) along the east side of Back Street.



Picture 7.7 Historic service buildings on the eastern side of Chapel Street. The building in the foreground still retains its cast-iron rain water goods.

- Complexes of yards, pathways (including opeways) and extensions of the main buildings between Fore Street and the Camel, along the

opeways between Fore and Back Streets, and in Mill Lane.

- The three storey lower part of the Sleep's building in Victoria Road.
- The medieval bridge, replaced in the early nineteenth century, was again rebuilt in 1957.

Wall finishes on Camelford's buildings are very mixed: fine ashlar; bare shillet stone with rough rubble finish; plain or incised stucco; stucco around openings; pebbledash, etc. The effect of this range in materials and also the range of paints applied to joinery, is of great variety in colour and texture through the town. It is generally a bright and cheerful mix, with some odd and dramatic juxtapositions.

Considering how close the town is to Bodmin Moor, it is surprising that there is not more use of granite.

Most roofs are of the local slate (Delabole being such a short distance away). Chimneys are sometimes of local stone, but are mainly brick (some rendered) and ridge tiles are simple and usually red.

Streetscape and views

Away from the A39, Camelford is a quiet town with fairly low levels of pedestrian and traffic movement. Most buildings, perimeters and gardens can be appreciated at leisure. Vehicles move fairly slowly and the free car parks mean that there is less on-road short-term convenience parking than in many other Cornish towns. Lorries do struggle up the hills and noise and fumes are a feature of these; the lower part of Fore Street is especially badly affected.

The Market Place is still wide and spacious, but the busy road greatly weakens the original open effect; the stream of traffic

splits the space down its length. Until the advent of the motor vehicle this space would have been crossed and recrossed at leisure, with most movements being lateral, first between market stalls and later between shops. Now the road emphasises the longitudinal and makes crossing the space hazardous. Consequently it is now largely controlled by a pedestrian crossing on the corner by the Mason's Arms.

Nineteenth century granite kerbs and pavements have been largely replaced with modern mass-produced materials, a great pity in terms of historic character and associations with the granite quarries of nearby Bodmin Moor. Most other Cornish towns are now better provided for with granite street furniture than the town that is closest to the De Lank quarries.

Back/Chapel Street has good slatestone gutters, slate bridges across them, and locally manufactured iron drain covers. Their effect is to give this street greater historic character than the more important central parts of town.



Picture 7.8 Slatestone gutters with slate bridges on Chapel Street.

Views into Camelford are most complete when descending Victoria Road and then turning into Market Place, but the twists in the roads mean that there are few extensive views of the medieval town. However, good streetscapes can be appreciated throughout the historic town.

- Both directions along Market Place.
- Up and down canyon-like Fore Street.
- Up and down leafy and architecturally varied Back/Chapel Street.
- Along the varied rows of High Street and Victoria Road, the former hard against the road, the latter set high above it.
- Along the twists of College Road and Mill Lane.
- Up and down the many and varied opeways.

Other important urban views are had from the higher opeways themselves, looking across the backs of properties between Fore and Back/Chapel Streets and from the lower riverside opeways, between Market Place and the river. From College Road the shape of the early town can still be identified from its varied roofscape.

Unfortunately views across the old fair ground at The Clease have been severely compromised by late 19th-century development and poor quality 20th-century accretions. These have fragmented what was once an important open space and have introduced a number of prominent, but poorly designed modern features that distract attention from both the space itself and the better-designed Victorian structures.

The modern housing developments at Mount Camel, Hillhead Gardens, Green Meadows, Warren's Field and Sunnyside Meadow have removed from the town its green backdrop and have also reduced its linearity. They have turned the strong diagonal lines climbing both sides of the Camel valley into generalised urban smudges. Fortunately the open ground of Enfield Park and the riverside meadows below the bridge survive and help delineate the lower edges of the old town.

Views out from Camelford are most extensive when looking south towards Roughtor and the Moor. Other more intimate rural views are to be found along the riverside walks. Enfield Park is a pleasant municipal garden with numerous trees; its wooded effect is enhanced by the survival of several mature trees on the east bank of the river, relics of Camelford House's ornamental gardens.

Its twisting topography and long history provide Camelford with a wide range of landmarks.

Landmark buildings include the following.

- The Market House.
- Darlington and Mason's Arms.
- Camelford, Bridge and Warmington Houses.
- The Indian King arts centre.
- Bush House.
- North Cornwall Museum.
- The 1930s church.
- All three chapels.

The bridge, the entrance to Enfield Park, and the lines of beeches at the northern and southern approaches to the town are all important local landmarks.

8 Character Areas

Understanding Character

In addition to the broad elements of settlement character identified in the previous chapter Camelford can be divided into four distinct character areas. These were first identified in the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey report on Camelford in 2005 produced by Cornwall County Council's Historic Environment Service report. They are :

- Medieval Camelford and the valley
- Fairground
- High Street
- Victoria Road

These character areas are differentiated from each other by their varied historic origins, functions and resultant urban topography, by the processes of change which have affected each subsequently and the extent to which these elements and processes are evident in the current townscape.

The special interest of each character area will be defined in order to assess its value or significance both as an individual area and as part of the settlement as a whole. This understanding can then form the basis for maintaining and enhancing Camelford in the future – to ensure that its special character is sustained and enhanced (this analysis draws heavily on the research already carried out by Cornwall County Council for the Urban Survey).

Medieval Camelford and the Valley

The medieval market centre this is still the commercial and social heart of the town. A high proportion of historic buildings survive

in this area and their range of dates from the sixteenth to the twentieth century lends great visual variety. The lively environment is further enhanced by the historic street patterns and interconnecting alleys and opes.

Historic Development

- Following the 1260 Charter a planted market town was created with a broad market place – its trapezoidal shape possibly originally extended as far as the second opeway along Fore Street. By 1311 there was a chapel of ease dedicated to St Thomas the Martyr west of the river's crossing point on the site of the present day entrance to Enfield Park). By 1327 there was a corn mill along Mill Lane.
- By the sixteenth century there were a number of inns and stables catering for travellers along the road from London to Falmouth. These included the Mason's Arms, the White Hart (on the site of the present Liberal Club) and the Darlington Inn. In 1521 a stone bridge was built across the Camel replacing an earlier wooden structure.
- During the late seventeenth century a number of impressive town houses were built including Warmington House, Bridge House and Camelford House, and the town's first grammar school was built in 1678.



Picture 8.1 Camelford House one of the fine town houses built in the late seventeenth century.



Picture 8.2 1-7 Market Place stand on the site of a former bowling green

- A further inn was built in the eighteenth century the Kings Arms which later became known as the Indian King. The 1753 map clearly shows a mill on the northern side of Mill Road, and buildings either side of Market Place and Fore Street. The development here was a mix of residential and commercial use. The development along Back Street was more piecemeal at this date. The map also shows the original course of the River Camel, which flowed directly to the south of the Mason's Arms before curving south to the river crossing. There was a bowling green south of the river on the site of nos. 1-7 Market Place. Sometime between 1753 and 1841 the course of the river was altered to its present configuration. In 1784 a Methodist Chapel was built on Back Street.
- By the 1830s there was a yarn market, a slaughterhouse, a wool warehouse, three smithies, a malthouse and a bakehouse near the centre of town. In 1806 an upper storey was added to the Market House to allow it to be used as a town hall, but the structure below dates from an earlier period. In 1810 a new Methodist Chapel was built to replace the eighteenth century building on Chapel Street. A further Methodist Chapel was built in Market Place in 1837. Sometime in the early nineteenth century the sixteenth century stone bridge was replaced. In the 1850s street lights were installed in the town centre. Many of the shops and public buildings date from this period and the more substantial houses on Chapel Street, Trefrew Lane and infilling on High Street and College Road. A number of public institutions were established around the town centre throughout the nineteenth century including a police station at the top of Fore Street in 1881 and a new school in College Road in 1894.
- Some new shopfronts were built including 29 Market Place and in 1922 Enfield Park was created on the site

of the old gas works. In 1937 St Thomas Church was built on a site to the east of the river. A cheese factory was built on Victoria Road (now Sleeps) and small factories and workshops along Mill Lane, High Street and Chapel Street. In 1957 the bridge was rebuilt as the Victorian bridge occasionally became clogged causing floods in Market Place.



Picture 8.3 The bridge over the River Camel was rebuilt in 1957 following a number of floods.

Activity and use

This area has always been the commercial heart of the settlement, the site of the market and until the eighteenth century the entire extent of the town. Its central role throughout Camelford's development is reflected in the variety of architectural styles of all periods, which in turn indicates the continuous prosperity of the area. Up until the mid twentieth century the busy atmosphere of pedestrian and commercial activity first evident in the medieval period would have survived remarkably intact. However the car and motor transport now dominate the centre of the town and the north-south passage of traffic is the governing characteristic rather than the lateral flow of pedestrians moving between the shops. This said, the town centre is still

a hub of commercial activity and through the surviving historic buildings, many of which are shops and inns, much of the historic character still remains – (particularly when there is a lull in the traffic!)

Architecture and historic qualities

There is a good survival of historic buildings in this area and as a result the built environment encompasses a wide range of styles and types. The predominant building type is relatively modest two-storey shops, offices and dwellings. These are built of local rubble stone with granite or brick dressings and local rag or scantle slate roofs. There are however a number of three storey and higher buildings particularly in the centre of the town and these together with the larger public buildings lend a sense of grandeur. Most of the taller buildings are rendered and many have sash windows.

The higher status buildings often have facades enlivened by classical detailing such as quoins, pediments and decorative doorcases. There are also a number of quirky buildings of eclectic design such as the four storey 9 Fore Street which incorporates gables and slate hanging into its design.



Picture 8.4 Classical nineteenth century doorcase on Bridge House – The six panel door incorporating stained glass panels is surmounted by a segmental arched hood supported by moulded consol brackets.

The Arts and Crafts movement is represented by the Memorial Institute and an Art Deco curved parapet has been applied to the façade of 29 Market Place.



Picture 8.5 Art Deco curved parapet on the façade of 29 Market Place.

The Gothic style is represented by the Methodist Chapel in Market Place, St Thomas' Chapel and the converted chapel on Chapel Street.

Surviving industrial buildings in the town centre include Sleeps on Victoria Road – whose former uses include a cheese factory, barracks for Napoleonic prisoners and an early motor garage - and the former mill and nineteenth century factory on Mill Lane.



Picture 8.6 Now a shop Sleeps was originally one of the town's industrial buildings.



Picture 8.7 Former industrial buildings on Mill Lane.

Key Buildings

- St Thomas Chapel, Victoria Road – built in 1937 this single storey building has green stone walls and granite detailing including simple rounded arches above the windows. The roof slates have been laid using the Delabole system which gives a pleasing uniformity to the roof and allows very small slates to be used.



Picture 8.8 St Thomas Chapel off Victoria Road was built in 1937.



Picture 8.9 The slate roof of St Thomas' was constructed using the Delabole system.

- Bridge House, Victoria Road – listed grade II. A seventeenth century town house remodelled in the late eighteenth century. This three storey building has a rendered façade with rusticated quoins, sash windows and a nineteenth century part glazed six panel door below a decorative segmental arched door canopy supported by moulded consol brackets. Nos. 2 and 4 College road built in the mid nineteenth and eighteenth centuries respectively adjoin Bridge House and are included in the listing.



Picture 8.10 One of Camelford's late seventeenth century town houses – the façade was remodelled in the late eighteenth century.



Picture 8.11 The mullion windows from the original sixteenth century house still survive at basement level on the front façade of Camelford House.

- Camelford House, Victoria Road (also known as 1,2,3 Manor Farm and No 5 Victoria Road) – listed grade II*. Originally late sixteenth century this building (now divided into three houses and an office) was extended in the mid seventeenth century and rebuilt around the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century. The building is predominantly rendered with granite dressings. Its symmetrical façade has nineteenth century sash windows, painted quoins and strings and deep overhanging eaves. The original sixteenth century mullion windows still survive at basement level. There are two wings at the rear - the left hand wing is rendered and painted with exposed granite dressings whilst the right hand wing is of stone rubble.



Picture 8.12 The mid-seventeenth century side extension to Camelford House has exposed granite dressings.

- Masons' Arms, Market Place – grade II. Originally a coaching inn and now a public house. This building dates from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, and was extended in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. It is stone rubble, rendered and painted with a rag slate roof (part of which has been bitumen coated). The eighteenth century two panel door still survives on the right hand range and there is a mixture of nineteenth century sash and casement windows. The two storey coach house

to the left has two wide segmental arched openings with plank doors and a chamfered left hand corner.



Picture 8.13 The irregularly placed windows and massive stone chimney stack indicate the early origins of the Masons' Arms.



Picture 8.14 The mid eighteenth century extension to the Masons' Arms with the adjoining late eighteenth century coach house and stables.

- Methodist Chapel, Market Place – grade II. Built in 1837 from stone rubble with granite dressings this building has a hipped slate roof with a gable end to the front. Its façade with gothic detailing, including two-light lancet windows and a two centred arch door opening reached by a stone ramp with iron railings, makes a significant contribution to the character of the town centre.



Picture 8.15 The façade of the Methodist Chapel built in 1837. Its stone rubble façade with granite dressings forms an important part of the townscape in the centre of Camelford.



Picture 8.16 Decorative cast iron grills on the front of the Methodist Chapel.



Picture 8.18 The nineteenth century shopfront on the façade of No. 23 Market Place.



Picture 8.17 The stone steps outside the Methodist Chapel are an important feature in the townscape.

- 23/25 Market Place – grade II. These mid to late nineteenth century stone rubble buildings with a stuccoed façade and slate roof still retain a wealth of historic features such as the nineteenth century shopfront and original sash windows and consequently make a significant contribution to the quality of the town centre.

- Town Hall, Market Place – grade II. Originally the market house until 1806 when the upper floor was added by the Duke of Bedford to form a town hall. The building is now used as the town library. Due to its prominent position and survival of historic features it has become the iconic building of Camelford and is used as a visual shorthand for identifying the town. Built from slate stone rubble with dressed stone quoins and arches to the window openings, it has a hipped scantle slate roof and a distinctive timber cupola with a clock and camel weather vane.



Picture 8.19 The distinctive town hall with its upper floor remodelled in 1806 has become the iconic building of Camelford.



Picture 8.20 Stained glass window on the southern façade of the Town Hall.



Picture 8.21 Interlocking tracery on the Town Hall windows.

- Warmington House, Market Place – grade II. This seventeenth century town house was remodelled in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. It has painted rubblestone walls and a slate roof. The nineteenth century details with symmetrical sash windows and doorcase with fluted Doric pilasters and frieze lends classical grace to the eclectic architecture of the Market Place.



Picture 8.22 The symmetrical late eighteenth/early nineteenth century façade of Warmington House is an important component in the historic Market Place.

- 34 Market Place – grade II. Adjacent to Warmington House this house was built and remodelled at around the same time, and is of similar construction. At only two storeys high and with less decorative detailing it is a more modest building than its neighbour but much of its historic integrity still survives including some early nineteenth century sash windows.
- Darlington Arms, Fore Street – grade II. Originally a sixteenth century coaching inn remodelled and extended in the early nineteenth century. The distinctive L shape of this painted rubblestone building with a slate hung timber frame at first floor level lends a great sense of enclosure at the head of Market Place. A pleasing mix of historic sash and casement windows, a jettied first floor supported by granite piers with a wrought iron balcony all add to the building's eclectic charm.



Picture 8.23 The Darlington Arms dates from the sixteenth century, but was extensively remodelled in the early nineteenth century.

- 9 Fore Street – The height of this building with its rather flimsy eighteenth century timber framed upper floors with a mix of slate, stucco and weatherboard covering make it a prominent and somewhat eccentric feature in the surrounding streetscape.



Picture 8.24 The eighteenth century timber framed upper floors of No 9 Fore Street.

- 18/20 Fore Street – grade II. This mid nineteenth century stone rubble building has a symmetrical ashlar façade with original sash windows at first and second floor level, decorative string courses and dressed stone segmental window openings. The fine quality of the stonework compliments Bush House on the other side of the road.
- Bush House, Fore Street – grade II. One of Camelford's finest houses rises to five floors including basement and attics and was formerly an hotel. The very finely dressed ashlar local stone façade has string courses and flat arches over openings including the double door with decorative fanlight. The side elevation is stone rubble with a classical doorcase.



Picture 8.25 Classical style doorcase with incised pilasters supporting a pedimented fanlight on the northern façade of Bush House.

- Indian King, Fore Street – grade II. This building forms a wing of Bush House and is included in the same list description. Its stone rubble walls with asymmetrical windows, long ground floor lintel and double doors reflect its earlier incarnations as a public house.



Picture 8.26 The long lintels on the ground floor of the former Indian King indicate its former use as a public house.

- Methodist Chapel, Chapel Street – Built in 1810 this stone rubble building with rendered façade and mixture of gothic and classical detailing such as incised quoins, semi-circular lunette, central arched entrance and arched lights was de-listed following its conversion into domestic accommodation in 1990.
- Sunday School, Chapel Street – Dating from the mid nineteenth century this stone rubble building with granite quoins and a slate roof has a ramp up to its central entrance with a nineteenth century iron balustrade similar to the ramped entrances to the Town Hall and Methodist Chapel in Market Place. The building was de-listed in 1999 following its conversion to domestic use.
- 2 Chapel Street – grade II. This building forms part of a group with Warmington House and 34 Market Place which it abuts. Built and remodelled at a similar time it has rendered stucco walls beneath a slate roof with gable ends. Surviving historic features of note include a nineteenth century door and doorcase with fanlight, sash windows and a

semi-circular headed window with radiating glazing bars.



Picture 8.27 The historic windows on No 2 Chapel Street which include tripartite and semi-circular headed sashes enhance the surrounding streetscape.



Picture 8.28 Nineteenth century doorcase with fluted pilasters on No. 2 Chapel Street.

- 12 Chapel Street - grade II. An early nineteenth century stone rubble house

with a rag slate gable end roof. The house has retained its original sash windows and doors.

Local details

With its variety of building styles, heights and plans the overall characteristic of the town centre area is one of lively diversity. This is also evident in the detailing of the buildings.

Many buildings retain wooden sash and casement windows, and original sixteenth century mullion windows can be found at basement level on Camelford House. Some buildings such as Camelford House and the Methodist Chapel, Market Place have granite window surrounds whilst others are of slatestone.



Picture 8.29 Classical style window on the façade of Lloyds TSB on Fore Street.



Picture 8.30 Wide eaves soffit on Bush House with modillion brackets.



Picture 8.31 An eclectic mix of Classical modillion bracket and Gothic intersecting tracery on No. 9 Fore Street.



Picture 8.32 Modillion brackets on the façade of 25 Market Place.

Many of the higher status buildings have classical detailing but other more local decorative features include plaster window surrounds on 52/54 Fore Street and the Mason's Arms, two storey canted bay windows – 21 Market Place and the Conservative Club and chamfered corner walls on the Mason's Arms and 4 Victoria Road.



Picture 8.33 The façade of the Conservative Club incorporates double height bay windows.



Picture 8.34 Double height bay windows on No 21 Market Place.



Picture 8.35 The corner of No. 4 Victoria Road is chamfered to improve access and visibility.

Double flights of granite steps with iron hand rails can be found on the town hall, the Sunday School on Chapel Street and the Wesleyan Chapel, Market Place.



Picture 8.36 The fine double flight of stone steps on the western façade of the Town Hall.



Picture 8.37 The double flight of stone steps outside the old Sunday School on Chapel Street.

A good number of original Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts still survive.



Picture 8.38 Historic shop front on Fore Street.



Picture 8.39 Historic shopfront on Market Place.

Local and traditional building materials

Nearly all the buildings have slatestone rubble walls, a large proportion of which have facades which are either rendered or painted.



Picture 8.40 Coursed slatestone walls with granite lintels on terraced houses on the western side of Fore Street

Some of the higher status buildings have stucco facades – Nos. 23/25 and No. 34 Market Place, and there are a few examples of rubblestone buildings with ashlar facades – Bush House and Nos. 18/20 Fore Street.



Picture 8.41 The stucco façade of 25 Market Place has applied classical detailing including quoins and moulded cornices on the doorframe and eaves.

The stucco façade of Warmington House has at some point been removed revealing the timber lintels beneath.



Picture 8.42 At some point the stucco has been removed from the façade of Warmington House revealing the timber lintels below.

The first floor of the Darlington Arms is timber framed and slate hung whilst the upper timber framed floors of No. 9 Fore Street are weather-boarded.



Picture 8.43 The slate hung timber framed upper floors of the Darlington Arms.

There is a variety of roof forms including simple vernacular pitched roofs with hipped and gable ends, sleigh (lean to) roofs, and on larger buildings double pile and deep plan roofs. The majority of roofs retain their original blue/grey Delabole rag or scantle slate coverings. A particular feature of the town are roofs laid using the Delabole system (a highly skilled method which gives a very regular appearance), but the majority of roofs are laid with random widths and diminishing courses. The majority of ridge tiles are simple clay or lead but a few later nineteenth century buildings have decorative crested and pierced ridge tiles. Traditionally hips were mitred rather than covered with clay tiles or lead flashings. Historic dormers are be found in this area and are both of the raking and gable end variety.



Picture 8.44 Nineteenth century gable end full dormers on Nos. 23 and 25 Market Place – both dormers have slate hung cheeks and No. 23 still has is original sash window



Picture 8.45 Early twentieth century dormers with crested ridge tiles and terracotta finials on the War Memorial Institute.

Most chimneys are slender brick stacks but there are a number of older substantial stone stacks, some of which have been rendered.



Picture 8.46 The mid eighteenth century extension to the Masons' Arms with the adjoining late eighteenth century coach house and stables.

Spatial analysis

This area consists of a number of contrasting spaces. Along Fore Street the road is narrow and the height of the buildings gives an enormous sense of enclosure - this is however dissipated at its southern end above Indian King where the modern housing is set back from the road. Chapel Street also presents a fairly enclosed space with development rising up either side of the hill in steps, but the lower height of some of the old workshops and outbuildings on the eastern side makes the sense of enclosure less intense.



Picture 8.47 The height of the buildings and the narrowness of the road give a great sense of enclosure on Fore Street.



Picture 8.48 The tall buildings and narrow road at the northern end of Chapel Street give a sense of enclosure.

At the southern end of Market Place there is a pleasing circle of buildings with the Darlington Arms at one end and the Library at the other, but the sense of intimacy is somewhat diminished by the constant flow of traffic on the eastern side.

The numerous opes and alleys leading off and connecting the main streets adds to the sense of an intensively developed townscape. Many of these opes are bordered by tall buildings or cut through buildings at ground level giving the impression of tunnels.

At the northern end of Market Place the street broadens and although either side of the road is lined with buildings there is a far greater sense of space. The impression of spaciousness increases at

the foot of Victoria Road where the townscape opens up further at the entrance to Enfield Park.



Picture 8.49 The width of the road and the entrance to Enfield Park gives an impression of spaciousness at the foot of Victoria Road.

Streetscape and views

John Betjeman in the 1960s celebrated the views along the main road through the centre of Camelford: a snaking street with fine historic buildings backed by green fields with mature trees along their hedges'. These views have now been compromised by recent residential developments on the slopes above and by the creation of the main lower car park.



Picture 8.50 The green fields and mature trees described by John Betjeman in the 1960s behind the historic building line have been developed for housing in recent years.

Side roads are short and twisty and views along them are therefore restricted. Mill Lane, cut deeply into the hillside and edged by tall buildings, is as dark as College Road, wider and opening onto the riverside meadows, is light.



Picture 8.51 The twisting roads restrict the views in the centre of the town.

The opeways are among Camelford's special places. An air of secrecy pervades most of them, where one expects to meet only local people. What makes them especially attractive, besides their practicality in cutting off lengthy detours, is the great variety in finishes. Their floors include granite or concrete steps, tarmac, concrete, cobbling and paving and their sides are formed by hedges, railings, fences and standing or semi-ruined buildings.



Picture 8.52 Granite steps leading to an opeway on the western side of Fore Street.



Picture 8.54 Cobbles, granite and slate are all used as surfacing along this ope.



Picture 8.53 Concrete steps and ramp, and an iron handrail in an ope leading off Market Place.



Picture 8.55 The entrance to an opeway on the eastern side of Market Place is formed through the side of a building.

The Camel is noisy, especially when in spate, and people walking over its bridge find it hard not to be at least momentarily distracted by it. It naturally dominates the

land east of Market Place and Fore Street and gives Enfield Park its sinuosity and feeling of fecund dampness.



Picture 8.56 The River Camel is an important feature of the townscape.

Public realm

Over the years there has been a piecemeal, haphazard and at times highly utilitarian approach to the public realm in Camelford which has resulted in areas of poor lighting and paving. Along Fore Street the pavements are generally tarmac with concrete curbs, and patches of modern brick paviours and concrete slabs. None of these surfaces are suitable for such an historically sensitive location. Similarly the street lighting is generally of a standardised form and not always sensitively positioned.

There are still however some very attractive areas of surviving historic paving such as the cobbles in front of the Darlington Inn and the well-preserved (and generally carefully repaired) slate-stone gutters with wrought and cast iron drain covers in Chapel Street.



Picture 8.57 The historic cobbled surfacing in front of the Darlington Arms greatly adds to the quality of the area.

As mentioned above the variety of surfaces in the opes and alleyways greatly enhances the public realm particularly where the historic granite steps, slabs, slates and cobbles still survive.



Picture 8.58 A flight of granite steps flanked by granite gate piers on Chapel Street.



Picture 8.59 Historic granite steps adjacent to the War Memorial Institute.



Picture 8.61 The cobbled surface of an ope.

Garden and boundary walls are generally slatestone with simple stone caps.



Picture 8.60 Granite slabs and slate form the surface of an ope.



Picture 8.62 Traditional diagonally laid slatestone garden wall abutting granite gate piers on Chapel Street.

Some of the higher status buildings include decorative features such as the ball finials on the gate piers outside Camelford House and the iron railings which surmount the low garden wall in front of Bridge House.



Picture 8.63 Granite gate piers with moulded cornices and ball finials outside Camelford House.



Picture 8.64 Nineteenth century iron railings in front of Bridge House with urn finials.

Other surviving historic elements of the townscape which enhance the character of the area include the clock and weathervane above the library, original shopfronts and signs, pumps, railings and cast iron brackets.



Picture 8.65 The distinctive camel weather vane surmounts the cupola of the Market House.



Picture 8.66 One of the towns historic pumps west of Market Place.



Picture 8.67 Decorative twentieth century railings outside Bush House.



Picture 8.68 Cast iron bracket on the western façade of Bush House.

Greenery and green space

In the main the centre of Camelford has a very hard landscape with the majority of buildings facing directly onto the street. There are however small gardens in front of some of the houses on Chapel Street, Camelford House and Warmington House which has a large established yew tree, and there are trees either side of the library. Where the development is only one building deep, however, the countryside still permeates the town.



Picture 8.69 Open fields still survive to the east of the Co-op car park.

The significant green spaces however are away from the central area. Enfield Park is a significant open green area which incorporates a children's play area and provides an amenity for the town. Although over eighty years old, some of the planting in the park still seems immature and the whole has a rather unfinished air.

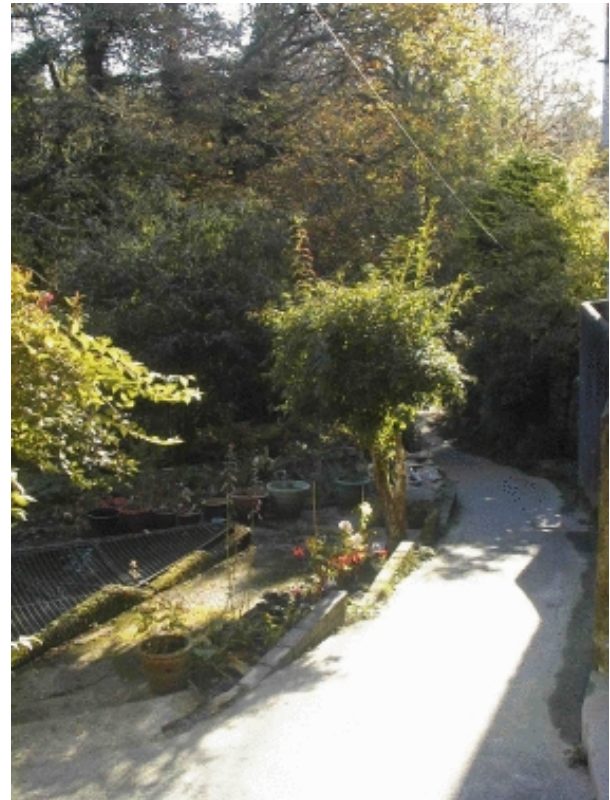


Picture 8.70 Enfield Park is a significant open area of green space within the town.

The fields to the east of the River Camel including Jackson's Meadow are an important open area and a footpath and bridge links the fields to the centre of the town via an ope.



Picture 8.71 Jackson's Meadow is an important local amenity and affords good views across the town.



Picture 8.72 The footpath leading via an ope from Market Place to the river.

The riverside is a haven for wildlife close to the town centre.



Picture 8.73 The River Camel flows close to the town centre to the rear of properties on Market Place.

Loss, intrusion and damage

Road signage and street-side clutter is not as dominating as in some other Cornish towns, but still undermines the quality of Camelford's core streetscape. Only some of the street lighting is through tall galvanised highway standards; most is by individual lights discreetly attached to telegraph posts and buildings. Road markings are mainly those necessitated by pedestrian crossings.

There has been relatively little loss of historic fabric in the heart of Camelford during the second part of the 20th century, a period when there has been substantial development at the town's edges. Principal losses have been on Fore Street, especially between The Indian King and the Co-op, but also short runs of dwellings (possibly including shops) on the west side. The new houses opposite Indian King do not follow the traditional street line and do not address the street with frontages to the rear or side. There has been some very recent reworking of disused buildings on Back Lane. A short terrace of 18th-century cottages east of Sleep's on Victoria Road has also been lost. But in the main, central Camelford has good survival of buildings, even if there has been, as in most Cornish settlements, some replacement of original shop fronts, windows, doors and wall and roof finishes.



Picture 8.74 Surviving historic sash windows on Fore Street add character and quality to the building's façade in contrast to the replacement windows on the adjoining property.

Neutral Areas

The design of the modern road bridge over the River Camel neither enhances nor detracts from the area. The small area of parking to the north of the library has an unresolved quality.



Picture 8.75 The car park to the north of the library is not a satisfactory space.

General condition and Buildings at Risk

Neglect of certain properties shows uneven levels of care of the historic fabric in this part of Camelford. Some structures

between Market Place and the river appear dilapidated and other more visible buildings in Fore Street are in poor condition. A detailed building condition survey was carried out for the Conservation Area in 2000 and identified three buildings in 'very bad condition' and 31 buildings in 'poor condition' within this area.



Picture 8.76 The rear elevations of buildings on Market Place show that repair work needs to be carried out to the upper floors.

No 9 Fore Street is in urgent need of repair and potentially could become a building at risk if repairs are not carried out in the near future.

Fairground Area

As Camelford's medieval fairground and then the modern livestock market, this area contributed greatly to the town's economic and social life. The importance of this area is now increasingly difficult to appreciate as it has become somewhat fragmented and cluttered.

Historic Development

- The 1260 charter made provision for an annual three day fair in the middle of July and the site of the early fair field was probably at the top of the two core medieval streets forming part of the

original medieval planted town complex.

- The 1753 map of the town shows an area called 'The Cleave or Fair Park' – an irregular shaped open area with a sinuous lane crossing it, essentially on the line of the present Cleave Road. A small square pound (for holding trespassing livestock) was set immediately south of the road. Its shape gives the impression that the Fair Park had by 1753 been encroached upon in a piecemeal fashion, especially by buildings and enclosures on the eastern, Fore Street side. A field called Crooked Meadow at the top of Back Lane may also have been established on the northern part of the Park.
- The area was still largely open in 1841, though the pound had been removed; it was re-located a little way down the hill behind Fore Street by 1881. In 1843 the school was built on the fair ground's southern part and by 1881 carriage works and barns had been constructed near the eastern edge (now the Museum). Also by 1881 a number of small enclosures that were to be part of the more formal cattle market were in place and by 1907 fixed pens had been installed. A dwelling had also been erected by then to the south of Cleave Lane where it exited from the fair ground area.



Picture 8.77 The former carriage works on the eastern edge of the fairground is now the award winning North Cornwall Museum and Gallery.



Picture 8.78 The side of the coachworks and western end of the former cattle market.

- All these developments had the effect of fragmenting the former open space and twentieth century works, combined with the closure of the livestock market in 1967, have continued that process, leaving the area with a confused, unresolved, and under-appreciated air - the latter reflected in only the northern half being included in the town's Conservation Area. The western dwelling has been extended to become a retirement home and the land to the south of Clease Lane has been made into a double car park divided by an access road to new

housing (Clease Meadows) to the south. A community centre, originally built in 1911 as a Drill Hall and Rifle Range, is now a focal point for this part of the Clease in the same way that the award-winning Museum is for the northern part. A valuable area of open ground, now mown grass, survives to the south-west of the Museum, but the character of this is compromised by the poor quality of design of adjacent bus shelter, signage, bins, etc. Downhill to the east a flat-roofed prefabricated building has been set up above the former cattle market, now used as a skate-board park.



Picture 8.79 At the southern end of the former fairground is an early twentieth century drill hall, now reused as a community centre.

Activity & Use

The Clease has become a transition area between Camelford's historic core and its modern extensions on the higher land to the north-west and south-west. The area is busy, with traffic using the car park and gaining access to the housing estate, and pedestrian traffic to the museum and community centre.

Architecture and historic qualities

Surviving historic buildings are largely from the nineteenth and twentieth century infilling of the area. The pound and a building shown at the southern edge of the area on the 1753 map have been lost and Cleave Lane has been tarmacked. But the major loss has been through accretions reducing the fair ground's open-ness.

The nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings set up around the edges of the Cleave are two-storeyed and fairly plain, even the public buildings. Local shillet, granite and slate are the main materials, with some brick and terracotta detailing.



Picture 8.80 One of the late nineteenth/early twentieth century buildings that fringe the former fairground site.

Streetscape and views

On the crest of a steep valley side, this area catches the wind and provides open views out to the farmland around Camelford and the higher tors of Bodmin Moor to the south. The ground falls away to the north and to the east, quite gently at first and then more steeply as Cleave Lane runs down to Fore Street. The effect of this is that views

across the area are usually incomplete, there being 'dead' or invisible ground at the lower edges when viewed from above.



Picture 8.81 Looking north east from the former cattle market apart from the roof of Indian Kings the historic core of Camelford lies hidden below.

The survival of the former fairground route in the form of Cleave Road adds to the historic interest of the area. The head of Chapel Street is now defined by the twentieth century building on its western side giving the character of a modern road and the other streets in the area are modern.

Public Realm

Public realm in this part of Camelford is generally poor. Pavements are of concrete and tarmac and the boundaries that have been inserted in the last 150 years are generally of a low standard – even the attractiveness of the local granite posts around the car parks is undermined by the use of tubular steel rails between them. As noted earlier, there seems to have been little consideration of the impact of the design and positioning of bus shelters, rubbish bins, road salt bins and road signage. As a result these features contribute to the cluttering of the Character Area.

Greenery and green space

The green in front of the museum is of great historic importance as a surviving remnant of the former open space of the fair ground.



Picture 8.82 This green is an important surviving historic feature as it represents part of the former fairground site.

Loss, intrusion and damage

The major loss in this area has been its sense of open-ness, and there are few clues left to its former role.

The public realm has been treated in a haphazard and uncoordinated way resulting in unnecessarily high levels of clutter.

The skateboarding area, whilst a good local amenity has been poorly designed.

Neutral Areas

The car park is bordered by a grass bank and reused granite posts but the utilitarian tubular steel rails undermine its quality.

General Condition and Buildings at Risk

The buildings in this area are generally in good condition.

High Street

The southern gateway to Camelford, a varied and largely vernacular set of modest dwellings interspersed with small stores, shops and carriage entrances, most of them set right up to a busy road.

Historic Development

- High Street is an essentially linear or ribbon development along the main road out of town to the south, in urban terms an extension of Fore Street beyond the pinch point at the Co-op. Most of the building is on the east side of the road, strongly suggestive that this was speculative development on the land of one of the town's landlords; it is significant that historic sources show the undeveloped land to the west of the road has usually been in different ownership. A line of beech trees along the hedgeline that continues away to the south also has an air of urban design rather than typical farmland. These trees emphasise the gateway quality of this part of Camelford to travellers approaching from the south.
- A house on the corner with Clease Road bearing a mid seventeenth century datestone (1648 - sadly partly obscured by a modern downpipe), truncated at its northern end by the widening of the junction, indicates that development immediately north of this Character Area is quite early. Most of the houses and buildings along High Street are shown on the 1753 map of the town and many, while fairly plain, have distinctively early features such as massive stacks (some perhaps seventeenth century) and uneven patterns of fenestration.



Picture 8.83 Although the modern render gives this house the appearance of a later building its datestone indicates it was constructed in 1648.



Picture 8.84 The cottages at the northern end of High Street date from the eighteenth, or possibly even the seventeenth century.



Picture 8.85 The massive chimneystack could indicate the building below dates from the seventeenth century.

- The street itself has had its alignment changed partway along, veering away slightly from the cottages which otherwise stand right on the roadside. This may date from the establishment of the Turnpike in 1795; improvements to the road would have included some straightening. All the cottages are shown hard against the road on the 1753 map.



Picture 8.86 The re-alignment of the road could date from the establishment of the Turnpike in 1795.

- Although predominantly made up of conjoined dwellings, there are several stores, semi-industrial buildings, carriage arches through to rear yards, and shops. There were also two former inns, the Western and Volunteer, the former (now no.57) still open in 1907, but the latter replaced by that date by a Police Station. This mix of former uses still gives this area a distinctively more workaday character than that of the purely residential development along Victoria Road (Character Area 4). The buildings are also generally earlier although there are several mid to late Victorian infill and replacement dwellings.
- In 1907 a sewage works was built down by the Camel on the site of the modern works.

Activity and use

This area is now predominantly residential although a few shops and other business still remain including a motorcycle shop, garage and an antiques store. There is an almost constant stream of traffic at the front of the houses, but this contrasts with the quiet of gardens with open fields beyond to the rear.

Architecture and historic qualities

Most of the dwellings along High Street are simple two-storey houses though there is considerable variety in size - some are double-fronted others one room wide. There is variety in the fenestration pattern with the Victorian buildings having standardised and symmetrical window patterns, and also the detailing.



Picture 8.87 The symmetrical façade of one of the Victorian houses along High Street contrasts with..



Picture 8.88 The more irregular fenestration of earlier cottages

There are no front gardens, but many of the houses have passages to rear yards and gardens.



Picture 8.89 Passageway leading to rear yard off High Street.

In addition to the houses there are a number of outhouses, stores and workshops. There is also evidence of earlier shops that have now converted to domestic use such as No 9 where the original shop fascia board is still in evidence.



Picture 8.90 One of the historic stores along High Street.



Picture 8.91 The fascia from an earlier shopfront has been preserved on the façade of No.9 High Street.

Local details

A few end terrace houses have either hipped or half-hipped roofs, but most are gabled.

A good number of historic windows still survive and the majority of these are sashes. Most of the houses have plain flat facades but the motorcycle shop has a first floor oriel window inserted during the Victorian period.

Local and traditional building materials

Some walls are bare shillet, but more have been rendered or stuccoed, a few with decorative features, such as the hood mouldings on No.17 and the rusticated quoins on No 9. Roofs are all local rag slate where they have not been recently replaced with asbestos or similar modern materials and chimneys are mainly of brick except where they are the much more massive and earlier seventeenth or eighteenth century stone stacks (eg no.11).



Picture 8.92 Some of the houses on High Street have not been rendered or painted and have facades of bare shillet.

Where the walls have remained un-rendered it is possible to see some houses have granite lintels, but some buildings have wooden lintels.



Picture 8.93 Wooden lintels on No. 45 High Street.

The stores and outhouses tend to be mainly exposed shillet with slate or replacement corrugated iron or asbestos roofs.

Streetscape and views

High Street is one of Camelford's least steep streets, but by being on the crest of the valleyside and on the eastern edge of a rounded down, it is one of the town's most exposed.



Picture 8.94 View looking east from the garage.

There are extensive views eastwards across the Camel to Roughtor, celebrated in the names of some of the houses (Mount View, Roughtor View) but less wide views west where the ground continues to rise. Also to the west is a modern industrial estate.

Views along the street itself are always incomplete as it bulges out near the centre (probably following the former top edge of a medieval field), closing off distant views along the row. Some of the later houses were also set back a bit further from the roadline, again making them less visible.

There is a peculiar sense of enclosure, with buildings tight against the road on one side, but fairly open on the other where much less well organised modern development has been permitted.



Picture 8.95 Looking south from High Street – The historic No 63 immediately abuts the countryside giving a very rural aspect to the southern side of the town.

Public realm

The pavements in this area are modern tarmac with concrete kerbs but there is some evidence of earlier cobbles beneath the carriage arches.



Picture 8.96 Evidence of cobbles can be glimpsed beneath this carriage arch on High Street.

At the southern end of High Street No 63 has garden walls formed from alternate bands of diagonally laid slatestone - a traditional wall and field boundary in this part of north Cornwall. An area of land to the north of the Garage is bordered by the

remains of a wall constructed from massive slabs of vertical slate - another traditional garden boundary.



Picture 8.97 The traditional diagonally laid slatestone garden wall to No 63 High Street.



Picture 8.98 Slabs of slate form a boundary on land behind the garage.

The land behind the row of houses at the northern end of Fore Street has a row of slatestone pig houses built during the late nineteenth century.

Greenery and green space

The historic houses on High Street are nearly all built straight onto the road presenting a very hard landscape with only No. 61 at the southern end having a front garden and No 63 having a side garden

adjacent to the road. However to the rear of most of the houses there are back gardens – either abutting the house or laid out in the form of allotments on the sloping ground to the east in the case of Nos 5 -15. These gardens behind Fore Street immediately abut the open fields leading down into the Camel River Valley and this open green prospect can be glimpsed where there are gaps in the building line.

Loss, intrusion and damage

Some early buildings were replaced by Victorian ones, but the historic fabric has largely survived intact. Considering that the houses are immediately adjacent to a busy road, it is also surprising to see so many nineteenth century sash windows still in place. Most roof and wall coverings are also intact.

A few dormers and skylights have been introduced in recent years to light loft conversions

Neutral areas

The garage whilst entirely in keeping with the mixed nature of use along this road is set back from the historic line of development.

General condition and Buildings at Risk

There are no buildings at risk in this area, but inevitably the proximity to such a busy highway has resulted in staining on some of the facades, and some buildings are in need of repair.



Picture 8.99 The Victorian horned sash windows on this house on the High Street are in need of repair.

Victoria Road

The eastern gateway into Camelford where the A39 passes between a farmstead and the top of a fine row of early nineteenth century dwellings.

Historic development

- The earliest development in this area took the form of a post-medieval farmstead at the junction of the lane to Tregoodwell, now called Dairy Cottage, just outside the current Conservation Area boundary.
- Other earlier development includes the detached house Culloden dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth century - formerly a small farmstead – which also lies just beyond the Conservation Area boundary. Opposite Culloden in the eighteenth century was a turnpike tollhouse, which was subsequently demolished to make way for the late Victorian detached house now called the Countryman Guest House.
- The main development in this area occurred during the early nineteenth century when a fine row of cottages were built set back from the north side

of the road above terraced and sloping gardens. They share a build line but have varied forms and finishes suggesting they were speculative developments. Most were in place by 1841 as was the small Bible Christian chapel - its adjacent Sunday School was built in 1885. The Manse which also forms part of this group was built by 1881 (its attractive glazed porch being a twentieth century addition).

- There has been some later twentieth century residential infilling and extensions to the built-up area (again largely to the north of the main road) are ongoing.

Activity and use

Since the closure of the chapel and Sunday School, and their conversion to domestic accommodation this area is now solely residential. Like Fore Street it is fairly noisy due to the heavy use of the road.

Architecture and historic qualities

This is an area with relatively modest and simple buildings using local materials, nevertheless the main row on the north side of Victoria Road displays considerable variety of form and finish, making it one of the most interesting residential streets in this part of Cornwall. The hipped roof and symmetrical façade of The Old Manse at the lower west end gives it the air of a comfortable house that might normally be expected to be detached, not tacked onto a line of relatively modest cottages. Its neighbour, Chapel Cottage, probably the chapel's original manse, is a narrow dwelling but still displays its former status through a ground-floor bay window.



Picture 8.100 The Old Manse, built in 1851 has slatestone walls with granite dressings and a hipped slate roof

The Bible Christian Chapel and Sunday School are a delightful set-piece, the latter (1881) having squat granite pinnacles at each end of the parapet that hides its gabled roof. The Chapel itself (1841) has a hipped roof and the two are fronted by an enclosure surrounded by original railings reached by a flight of five granite steps.



Picture 8.101 The former Bible Christian Chapel built in 1841 and adjoining Sunday School.



Picture 8.102 Nineteenth century cast iron railings with palmette finials outside the old chapel on Victoria Road.

Most of the cottages further up Victoria Road are double fronted, but some have single ground floor windows. Many cottages are pairs with shared rooflines, but the Delabole rag slate roofs generally step up as the hill is climbed. Wall finishes are very mixed: many are bare shillet stone, others have plain stucco, but some have raised stucco decorative labels around openings and a few have dense coverings of white quartz chippings. Number 19a, built shortly before 1881, projects dramatically from the row, creating a strong architectural punctuation mark and in many respects disturbing the row's balance. It seems likely that there is an interesting story behind its creation. Further up the street there are six cottages that are set forward of the others and have very narrow roadside gardens.



Picture 8.103 No 19a projects dramatically from the row of cottages along Victoria Road.



Picture 8.104 Cottages set close to the roadside at the eastern end of Victoria Road.

The Countryman Hotel (formerly Sunnyside), a substantial double-fronted dwelling with neat dormer windows, was purpose built as a roadside hostelry.

Culloden House, opposite the entry to Trefrew Road, is a simple symmetrical farmhouse, but with an unusual round arched niche above the door. A surviving barn (recently converted) lies behind to the west.



Picture 8.105 Culloden House was originally a farmhouse.

Local and traditional building materials

Walling is mainly shillet and the roofs are Delabole slate. Chimneys are brick (some rendered) and ridge tiles are simple and usually red.

Streetscape and views

This area is on the A39 Camelford-Bude road and is in effect the eastern gateway into Camelford providing many travellers with their first impression of the town.

Victoria Road climbs east-north-east from the Camel Valley along the base of a gently climbing side valley. As a result views are not as extensive as might be expected. Buildings that face the road have been either terraced into the slope or step up with it. Views along the main row on the north side of Victoria Road are normally from below, the houses being part way up the slope of the valley. Consequently the cottages appear larger and more imposing than they otherwise might. The drama of the view has been somewhat spoilt by the projecting mass of number 19a. Beyond the row to the east is a well-designed row of modern housing that picks up on many

aspects of the cottages' character and may be considered a good example of modern sensitive design.

Public realm

The busy A39 that reuses Victoria Road is constrained by historic boundaries (field hedges to the south and garden walls to the north) and so is a simple two-way road on a single carriageway. Double yellow lines down both sides keep it clear of parked vehicles and there is space for a modernised concrete-kerbed tarmac pavement on only the northern side.

Garden walls are mainly slatestone with slatestone, slate or quartz copings.



Picture 8.106 Slatestone garden wall with quartz coping stones.



Picture 8.107 Edge bedded slatestone garden wall with slate copings.

Greenery and green space

Despite the heavy stream of traffic this road is far less urban in feel than High Street mainly due to the hedges on the southern side of the road bordering fields and the long front gardens on the northern side.



Picture 8.108 The hedges and trees on the southern side of Victoria Road give the area a pastoral character.

Loss, intrusion and damage

The 1753 map shows further rows of cottages along the south side of Victoria Road west of Culloden which have been replaced by bungalows. Otherwise there has been virtually no loss of historic fabric

in this Character Area beyond the replacement of many windows and doors (especially on the row of cottages). Wall and roof coverings have not been replaced as much as in many other Cornish settlements.

General condition and Buildings at Risk

The buildings are generally in good condition and there are no buildings at risk.

9 Problems and pressures

Buildings

- Although there are still a number of surviving historic buildings in the town, there are an increasing number of replacement windows in non-traditional materials of inappropriate design on historic buildings in prominent locations
- Modern dormers and roof lights have been inserted into historic and highly visible buildings.
- Many shopfronts have been replaced by standardised ones over the years.
- There are a number of vacant or under-used buildings – several shops have vacant upper floors. Maintenance levels of these structures are especially low.
- Some of the more informal workshops and outbuildings which contribute so greatly to the character of the town are in a poor state of repair.

Designations

- The drawing of the current Conservation Area boundary only includes the northern half of the historic former fair ground and omits the important farmstead complexes at Culloden and Dairy Cottage.
- There are some significant historic buildings which are not listed including the seventeenth/eighteenth century cottages along High Street.

Public Realm

- The road (despite the recent installation of a pedestrian crossing) still continues to dominate the centre of the town compromising its character, making life difficult and

unpleasant for pedestrians and threatening the historic fabric.

- Open public spaces in the centre of the town are limited. The small areas either side of the Market House are currently devoted to the car either as parking or as a road junction.
- The opeways provide great connectivity throughout the town, but in some cases appear neglected and under maintained.
- Paving and pavement furniture in Camelford has been subject to extensive repairs over the last twenty years that have severely diminished the historic character.
- Street lighting is generally of a standardised form and the streetscape is also affected to a degree by overhead wires.
- The current down at heel condition of the Clease Road car park gives visitors a poor first impression of Camelford.
- The sense of open-ness in the former fairground area has been eroded over the years.
- The design of the skateboarding area on the site of the old cattle market is poor.
- The A39 along Fore Street and Victoria Road are streets in an urban area, a place where people live and walk about – most of its surface and roadside treatment however is that of a major highway.
- Garden and boundary walls are at risk of being demolished for 'off street' parking

- There are a number of dominant and inappropriately designed overhead cables
- Throughout the town there are poorly designed signs in the public realm and signage clutter

10 Recommendations

Buildings

- Windows in buildings in sensitive and highly visible locations should be of traditional materials and design. Historic windows should be repaired where possible or replaced to match originals
- Camelford has an admirable survival of original rag slate roofs which contributes greatly to the town's character. In order to preserve this asset the insertion of further dormer windows, rooflights and the replacement of rag slate coverings should be limited.
- Support should continue to be given to the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) which set out to ensure that the fabric of the town centre is carefully repaired. The repair and reinstatement of historic shopfronts forms part of this scheme.
- When the HERS comes to an end consideration should be given to a Living Over the Shop Scheme (LOTS) that would encourage the reuse and repair of the upper stories of shops ensuring their future maintenance and improve security.
- Every effort should be made to retain the outhouses and stores along Chapel Street, Fore Street and the opeways, and to resist their removal or conversion.

Designations

- Extend the Conservation Area to include the southern half of the fairground, including the former school, community hall and adjacent corrugated iron garage and at the

northern end of the town add Culloden and Dairy Cottage.

- A review of the Listing of the town should be carried out including consideration of the early cottages along Fore Street.

Public Realm

- A distributor road, or by-pass, probably to be located to the north and west of the town, is currently proposed. This and the imminent improvements to the A30 on the Goss Moor (which should reduce that lorry traffic currently using the A39 to avoid the low bridge on the A30) should improve conditions in this Character Area. However, the by-pass will not be in place for some time. A second pedestrian crossing, to be controlled by lights, currently proposed for the lower part of Fore Street, should beneficially rationalise the vehicle-pedestrian relationship. Care should be taken to ensure that this scheme's impact on fabric and character is minimised. Commercial signage should reflect in its scale, materials, colour and siting the sensitive nature of its surrounding historic environment. Fluorescent, plastic or perspex signs should be avoided
- Car parking to the south of the market house should be removed providing that future use maintains the present open character and does not dilute it through fussy design.
- Sensitively repair and then maintain the opeways. Retain as much of their original surfaces and edgings as possible to ensure that they do not lose their simple functionalist character

(work along these lines is planned as part of the HERS programme).

- The HERS intends to carry out an enhancement scheme from Market Place to the top of Fore Street using reclaimed, locally sourced granite slabs or setts and granite kerbs.
- A street lighting scheme is proposed as part of the HERS, which also intends to underground overhead lines.
- The Clease Road car park should be landscaped reusing the granite posts and with good quality co-ordinating signs and street furniture.
- Retain the open area that survives at the former fairground site and extend it by reducing unnecessary divisions and clutter, and relocating features such as the obtrusive and poorly designed bus shelter.
- Redesign the structures, fencing etc associated with the skateboard area.
- Enhance the public realm along the Fore Street and Victoria Road including pavement surfaces and kerbs, street lighting, roadside signage and road surface markings.
- Consideration should be given to serving an Article 4 Direction to control the demolition of walls and hedges, especially for the creation of hard standings
- Overhead cables should be appropriately sited in order to impact less on the surrounding historic and natural environment – the undergrounding of overhead cables in the centre of the town is to be carried out as part of the HERS.
- Reassess the current signage to ensure any redundant or over-scale signs are removed. New signage should be restricted to the minimum necessary, of good quality materials and design, and should be sited

sympathetically to the historic environment.

11 Opportunities

- The riverside walk should be better valued and maintained as an important local asset, and every effort should be made to retain the open areas of significance along the river in order to preserve the urban-rural definition.
- More could be done to present the town to a wider public via web sites and printed literature.
- The town trail could be expanded to include more of its historic and natural heritage.
- The long-distance paths between Camelford and the countryside could be improved

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