The Blisland Parish Landscape Character Assessment

The Landscape Character Assessment Process

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Foreword by Stephanie Meads, Chair of Blisland Parish Council.

'Producing a Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) for Blisland Parish has been a key piece of work for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Community consultations have emphasised the importance of our moorland environment to all who live and work here, and how much the landscape is valued by both local residents and visitors.

The Local Landscape Character Assessment project describes what it is that evokes such strong passions and feelings for where we live, work and play and how important it is that this is preserved for future generations to enjoy.

I would like to thank Kath Statham and all of the local volunteers who have contributed, for their hard work and commitment to the project and drafting the Blisland Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Background to the Assessment

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the Blisland Parish landscape in order to ensure that future decisions which may affect the parish are based on a thorough understanding of the character of the landscape and by recording the Parish's current characteristics, both its history and landscape, we are helping to protect its future.

As part of the preparation for drafting a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Blisland, the Steering Group decided that a Local Landscape Character Assessment would provide valuable evidence to underpin the emerging plan. Community surveys conducted in 2015 and 2019 confirmed that the local community felt very strongly about the quality of the local landscape, with 97.4% of respondents rating it important or very important to their enjoyment of living here.

As well as gaining a clearer understanding of the characteristics of the local landscape that makes the parish so distinctive, the activity of undertaking a Local Landscape Character Assessment also provided an opportunity to engage more volunteers with the neighbourhood planning process.

The Steering Group contacted Kath Statham (Landscape Architect at Cornwall Council) to find out how best to go about it. Kath attended an initial meeting with the Steering Group to provide advice, and subsequently delivered a training session for our group of volunteers on the 28th October 2019.

This provided background to the landscape character assessment process and a methodology for fieldwork to record the specific features in the parish landscape. The volunteer group then split into teams to undertake the required fieldwork over the following few months. A further feedback meeting then took place on 13 February 2020 to consider queries and look at the results. Section 3 of this report goes into more detail about the technical process of preparing the Local Landscape Character Assessment.

The volunteers' work was very productive and now provides us with a comprehensive description of the Blisland Parish landscape, as outlined in section 4 of this report.

Local Landscape Character Assessment

What is 'Landscape'?

The concept of 'landscape' is more than just what we can see; it is a complex interaction of many factors, landform, soils, flora and fauna, as well as what we hear, smell and feel, and our memories and associations with a place. All landscapes are shaped over time, both by natural forces and the activities of people using the land for various purposes.

So what is 'Landscape Character Assessment'?

Landscape character assessment is a widely accepted framework which identifies and describes elements and features which come together to give a locality a distinct sense of place. Understanding what it is that residents and visitors value about the distinct quality of the landscape enables informed decisions to be made, so that future development conserves and enhances, rather than erodes, that character.

Before the preparation of the Blisland Local Landscape Character Assessment, there were two levels of character assessment used to describe the character of Bodmin Moor:

- 1. Nationally Natural England's National Character Area 153, and
- 2. Locally through the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment Character Areas 32 and 33.

What is the 'Blisland Local Landscape Character Assessment'?

The current national and local (Cornwall Council level) descriptions do not provide a sufficient level of detail to inform the Blisland Neighbourhood Development Plan, because the 2007 LCA has character areas of such a large scale in comparison to a Parish. It has therefore been necessary to undertake a new comprehensive assessment of the parish landscape character to create a more detailed evidence base to underpin the policies of the plan.

This Local Landscape Character Assessment describes in detail the special qualities of the landscape which it will be important to conserve and enhance in order to retain our unique locally distinctive sense of place.

It is an evidence base for community led planning which has been researched, written and edited by local people.

The parish has been divided into three generic landscape 'Character Types' which define the locality through similar characteristics of topography.

The locations of each 'Character Type' have been identified on an Ordnance Survey map base as shown below.

1. High Moorland

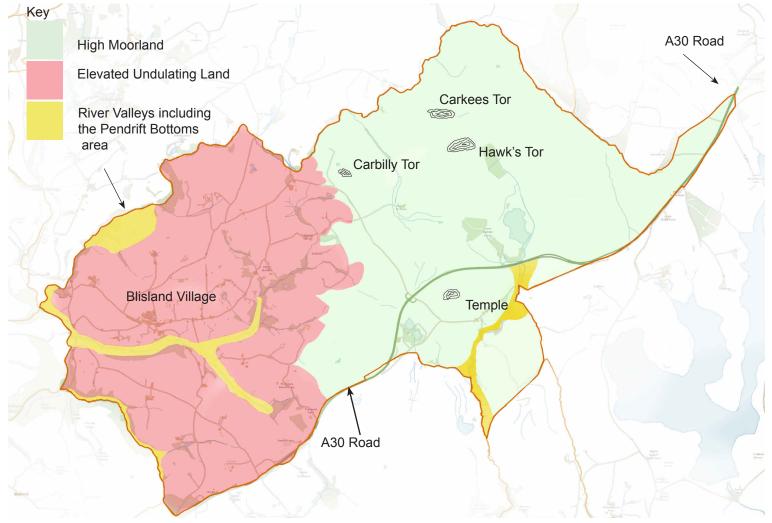
2. Elevated Undulating Land

River Valleys

 (including Pendrift Bottoms)

Shaded Green on the map Shaded Pink on the map Shaded Yellow on the map

The Blisland Parish Landscape Character Map



Produced under Ordinance Survey Licence no. 100061365

In addition to the map which visually identifies each 'Character Type', a detailed description of the elements of character which make each 'Character Type' distinct was provided. These detailed descriptions were prepared by local volunteers going out into the landscape and recording the character onto field assessment sheets against a series of headings. The headings follow those of the 40 Character Area descriptions within the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment, and it provides more local detail.

As well as the character information recorded by the volunteers, the mapping which locates details of landscape designations including the Camel and Allen Valley area within Blisland Parish, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Scheduled Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Wildlife Resources and Public Access and footpaths, can be found on pages 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27.

The volunteers visually recorded the landscape of each 'Character Type' through photographs, and these have been used to supplement this document.

Whilst the thorough work undertaken by the volunteers created the factual element of the landscape character description, people value the landscape for many different reasons, both personally and economically, and the LLCA needed to also describe what the local community feels is important, and what it doesn't want to lose within its landscape.

To understand what the Blisland Parish community values about its landscape the 'Character Type' assessment work compiled by the volunteers was displayed at a public consultation event in the Blisland Village Hall on 10 July 2021 and was then available in the village shop during July/ August. Comments received informed this final document.

Of what use is the Blisland Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA)?

The LLCA has been primarily prepared to provide a robust evidence base to underpin the Neighbourhood Development Plan. It does this by describing in detail the character of the parish. However, that is not the sole purpose of this document, and it also considers and informs other aspects, articulated in the Blisland Neighbourhood Development Plan, such as:

- * Defining the locality highlighting what creates the Blisland sense of place
- * Celebrating what is important to the local community and visitors
- * Describing the relationship between people and the land
- * Identifying future development pressures
- * Providing guidance for land management and future development
- * Helping set priorities for future land management and siting of development
- Objectively guiding the right development to the right place
- * Informing decisions on the environmental implications of a development application
- * Ensuring quality of design where local character and vernacular building styles are respected
- * Providing detailed environmental information relating to designated landscapes.



On the Beacon, between Blisland village and Carwen, looking down to the Camel Valley

The detail of the Blisland Landscape Character Assessment

This section gives the details of the three types of landscape as surveyed by local people. (See Map on page 3)

It is important to note that the countryside within the boundaries of Blisland Parish should not be seen in isolation from its context as part of the wider Bodmin Moor.

All the different landscape types and varieties of habitats are all interdependent on each other and part of one dynamic whole.

These interconnected habitats are home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, and approximately 50% of the Parish has Statutory Nature Conservation Designation, including:

- * Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- * Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- * Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- * National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- * Local Nature Reserves
- County Wildlife Sites (CWS)

Examples of the various 'Land Characteristics' in the Parish



High Moorland at Hawk's Tor



High Moorland at Carkees Tor



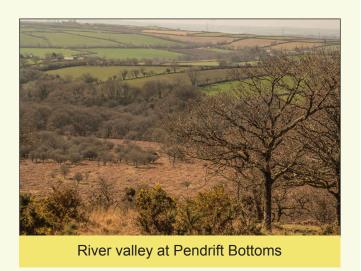
Elevated undulating land at Trehudreth Downs



Elevated undulating land at Newton Downs



River valley looking down on Lavethan Woods



High Moorland

The Surveys were undertaken from:

Hawks Tor,

Carbilly Tor,

Kerrow Downs / Jubilee Rock towards Carwen and

Temple Tor.

Key Characteristics:

- * High Moorland is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- * Large areas of Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Gently undulating upland with prominent tors of granite outcrop
- * Lack of man-made structures and intrusive development
- Wild, wide open spaces
- * Abundance of prehistoric remains and industrial heritage of old clay and stone quarries. These have now been reclaimed by nature, adding to the wild timeless atmosphere of the landscape
- * Grazed under commoners' rights by roaming herds of cattle, sheep and ponies
- * Ancient oaks and hawthorn trees hung with lichens and mosses
- * Granite Parish boundary stones which were restored and reset some years ago.



The Cheesewring at Carbilly Tor, Blisland

Topography and Drainage

Undulating open moorland rising to tors at Hawks Tor (307m), Carkees Tor (281m), Carbilly Tor (266m) and Temple Tor (251m). The De Lank river forms the northern boundary of the parish – fairly fast flowing on the north west flank, otherwise ponds and marsh form in wet weather forming areas of bog in the lowest parts. It drains into the Camel river.

The three tracts of granite upland of Trehudreth Downs, Greenbarrow Downs and Newton Downs adjoin and consist of short acid grassland with gorse and heather, regenerating as a result of recent grazing reductions. Both Trehudreth and Greenbarrow Downs are at a height of over 250 metres, but slope steeply downwards to a valley in the north where they meet the inbye land of Wallhouse and Durfold as well as the boundary with Newton Downs.

On the edge of Manor Common, between Newton and Deacons is a key area, where the moor drains into the start of the stream which forms the watercourse from there through Waterloo and Lavethan Wood. There is a distinctive merging of the biogeography of the open moor with the marshy phytogeography of the valley.

On lower areas of the moor there are small streams and marshy areas which remain even in summer.

Soil is described as slowly permeable, very acid, gritty loamy upland soil with wet peaty patches.

Low scrub cover with small patches of pasture for grazing.

Cornish stone hedges surround the various permanent pasture fields.

Bracken and gorse abound in profusion on the open moor.

Ancient oaks and hawthorn trees are hung with lichens and mosses which are indicative of high oxygen levels. These oaks have shaped themselves into the prevailing wind and in spring and summer provide an ecosystem which supports insects and rare birds.

SSSI designation across large portion of the moor. Maps for BAPs, SSIs and other ecologically sensitive sites included in Appendix.

These indicate "priority habitats" such as fen, upland oak, wet woodland, and heath which all characterise the parish of Blisland's rich biodiversity.

Land Cover and Land Use

On the higher moor, common land is used for rough grazing.

Fields off the higher moor are used for permanent pasture.

Agricultural land classification is 'poor to very poor'.

Large areas of open access land popular with walkers.



Common land at Kerrow Moor looking towards Newton Downs

Field and Woodland Pattern

Majority of moor is wild open space.

Where fields have been established on high moorland in central part of parish, they are small to medium sized.

Ancient hedges of typical granite and earth construction.

Many in the upland areas are not well maintained.

No ancient woodland but a couple of small coniferous plantations.



Ancient hedges of typical granite and earth construction'.

Building Distribution

The hamlet of Temple is to the east of Blisland. Until 1934, it was a parish in its own right. It is comprised of mainly typical moorland granite dwellings and agricultural building.

There is a scattering of isolated small farmhouses and barns, some now converted into dwellings and holiday lets.

Local characteristics – granite or rendered, Delabole slate roofs, granite mullions and dressed quoin stonework, mainly dating to C19 or earlier.

A few derelict houses.



The Hamlet of Temple



The road through Temple facing South West



The road through Temple, in an easterly direction.

Prior to the construction of the main road across the moor, from Bodmin to Bolventor, this was the route.

Transport pattern

The parish section of the A30 which divides Temple from the rest of the parish was made into a dual carriageway in 2017 and a new bridge built to span the crossroad.

Elsewhere, roads are unclassified minor country roads and lanes which are narrow and winding.

The moorland is open access land - see map in Appendix. There are no roads on higher open moor in the east. A few rough farm tracks.

Narrow unlit winding lanes link farms to rest of parish on western portion of the moorland. Lanes are open but, as roads descend, they have Cornish hedges and banks on either side which are unmarked and some poorly maintained.

Finger signposts at most junctions.



There are a number of public rights of way. A Parish action plan is in place to address poorly maintained signage and stiles.

Historic Features

This landscape is rich in a varied and considerable number of heritage assets and archaeological sites that reflect some 10,000 years of varying human occupation and activity.

An abundance of historic features characterise the area including prehistoric hut circles and Bronze Age barrows.

On Manor Common there is a large Neolithic stone circle called the Trippet Stones, and, on the south slope of Hawk's Tor, a late Neolithic henge and stone circle called the Stripple Stones.

There is a cluster of six Scheduled Monuments in the centre of Trehudreth Downs.

Jubilee Rock on Pendrift Downs has carvings dating from 1810. Industrial archaeological remains of several disused quarries and clay workings.

Temple Village named for Knights Templar who established a preceptory in the vicinity in 12th century.

Historic landscape Classification: Upland Rough Ground with some Relict Industry.

Condition

Open moor area managed and grazed under commoners' rights.

Tends to become muddy in extreme weather exacerbated by farming activity.

Vegetation cleared by Commoners but overdone in some places leading to bare open spaces where gorse and bracken has been stripped.

Some damage of the moorland by scramble bike rider activity.

Aesthetic and Sensory:

Wild / unspoilt / rugged / windswept / unenclosed.

Calm and undisturbed. Strong sense of solitude and being surrounded by nature.

Dark Skies designation due to low level of light pollution.

Distinctive features

Solitude and isolation.

Wide open space with granite boulders and craggy tors.

Herds of free ranging cattle, sheep, and ponies.

Conifer plantations at north and west of Hawks Tor quarry

On the edge of Manor Common, between Newton and Deacons, is a key area where the moor drains into the start of the stream which forms the watercourse from there through Waterloo and Lavethan Wood.

There is a distinctive merging of the biogeography of the open moor with the marshy phytogeography of the valley.

Views

Extensive views across vast tracts of landscape. These are natural.

Wild, open views with minimal development and not obscured by pylons or communications equipment.

Long distance views to both north and south coasts and estuary of the River Camel.

To the south, views of the clay country of Bugle and Stenalees.

From Kerrow Down, open views across the moor to both Brown Willy and Roughtor.

From the highest vantage point in Temple, there are 360-degree views.

Hawks Tor and Brown Willy to north.

Glynn Valley clay works to south and St Belarmin's Tor to south west.

Clear skies at night - International Dark Skies Designation for Bodmin Moor.



....wild, open views.

On Carbilly Tor looking over to Hawk's Tor

Relationship to the Adjacent Character Types:

Transition from elevated farmland to moorland is very gradual.

Elevated Undulating Land

The surveys were taken from:

White Cross
Cocks Penrose
Preeze Cross
Tregenna Road
Lane to Pendrift



The long view from new A30 over bridge at Penlan towards and beyond Trewardale

Key Characteristics

- * Conservation Area encompassing Blisland Village Green, its immediate surroundings and the Grade One Listed Church.
- * Natural undulating traditional Cornish farmland rising towards open moorland in the east.
- * Open unspoilt landscape, undeveloped.
- * Tranquility.
- Narrow winding lanes, some steep.
- * Important vistas and views from Village Green.
- * Long distance views towards Brown Willy and Rough Tor.

Topography and Drainage

Naturally drained, undulating farmland in the west of the parish, dissected by a wooded river valley running westwards towards the Camel.

Towards the east, the landscape begins to rise to the higher moorland leading to Trehudreth Downs, a more open & unsettled landscape.

Biodiversity

Semi natural habitat, no significant invasive species visible, naturally formed hedgerows and ditches.

Land Cover and Land Use

Mainly agricultural land, predominantly settled pasture, used for livestock grazing. Isolated farm buildings and houses.

No significant development pattern other than around the settlement of Blisland.

Agricultural land, classification good to moderate.

Field and Woodland Pattern

Across the parish there is a mix of wall/hedge type construction:

- Surface stone and earth banks
- Dressed granite
- Dry stone walls
- Earth and hedged banks.

The hedges tend to be high and many likely to be at least several centuries old, if not older, with agrarian origins in Medieval times.

Tresarrett area has hedges made up of surface stone and earth banks, some drystone walling. Cocks Penrose/Barlendew area - surface stone and earth banks.

Village area - mix of surface stone walls, earth banks into the village, surface stone and earth walls, dressed granite.

Hedges in valleys and farmland generally well maintained with indigenous species of trees and natural scrub.

Field enclosures are small and medium with some buffer areas beyond the hedgerows.



Building Distribution

The settlement of Blisland lies in the northern half of this landscape, with traditional granite and other historic buildings around the Village Green and within the Conservation Area.





Beyond the Conservation Area, (on the road leading to Pendrift) are the newer estates of Manor Close, Meadow Plash, Pentor, Pentor Court and Percys Meadow.

On Tregenna Road, the gap that existed between the village and the older houses, has been infilled by modern dormer style bungalows.

A small compact development of semi-detached houses have been built on the opposite side of the road.

Outside of the village, there are farmhouses of predominantly natural stone and slate. Also scattered and quite isolated farm buildings which are a mixture of modern and traditional construction, which do not seem out of place.

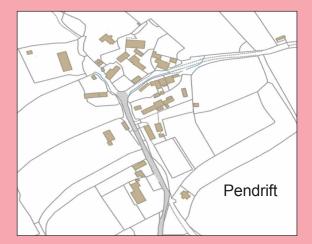


What does appear intrusive into the natural landscape are the modern buildings (including a modern service station located beside the A30).



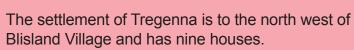
Building Distribution - con'td

The Hamlets and Settlements in the elevated undulating land section. Hamlets are established and historically recognised clusters of buildings. Settlements tend to have derived from former farms where the farm buildings have been converted from agricultural use into living accommodation.



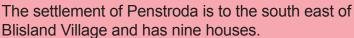
The Hamlet of Pendrift is to the north of Blisland Village and has thirteen houses.

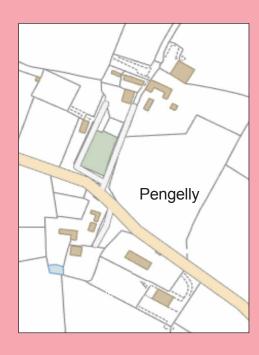
Tregenna





The settlement of Carwen is to the north east of Blisland Village and has nine houses.







The settlement of Pengelly is to the south east of Blisland Village and has five houses.

Transport Pattern



The area is crossed with single lane minor roads enclosed by granite hedges.

Public rights of way run between the hamlets of Pendrift and Tregenna, also from Barlendew north towards Waterloo and from Blisland Church south west to Cocks Penrose.

Historic Features

Historic landscape classification: medieval and post medieval farmland.

On the undulating farmland to the west there is a scattering of pre-historic and medieval presences recorded, a high proportion of them being adjacent to farmsteads in modern occupation - an indication that these farmsteads probably have an 'ancient' origin and may have had several centuries of occupation (if not more).

There are one hundred and thirteen listed buildings and relics in the parish. This includes fourteen medieval crosses.

The centre of Blisland village, around the Green, is a designated Conservation Area and includes several fine old buildings - the significant Grade One listed church of St Protus and St Hyacinth and the Grade Two Star listed Mansion House.

The Green itself, of Saxon rather than Celtic origin, is a rare feature within Cornwall.



Condition

The land to the west of the area is farmland. It is generally a natural landscape that has been traditionally livestock farmed for centuries. This could not reasonably be improved without considerable, and probably inappropriate, intervention.

To the east, the managed farmland translates into a steady rise towards the higher moorland of Trehudreth Downs, the gradually opening moorland making a contrast between the two differing characteristics, but for the most part making a progressive and natural transition - if there is a demarcation it is the Trethorne/Penstroda lane.

Aesthetic and Sensory

A very tranquil landscape. The area is elevated and is exposed to the prevailing weather and south west winds. There is a progressive change as you work to the east as the undulating farmland begins its transition to higher open moorland.

Light noise from Hantergantick Quarry on occasion, in the background and not particularly intrusive.

Road noise from the A30 on the southern edge, particularly in the Summer.

Minimal light pollution - the entire area is within the Dark Sky designated area.

Little change in the experience the landscape can offer as the seasons change, apart from an abundance of Spring flowers in the hedgerows and beside the lanes.

Distinctive Features

Granite including gateposts, hedges and properties.

Narrow lanes with occasional tree tunnels.

Generally undeveloped. Small developments in the village are well hidden and unobtrusive.

Blisland Village Green is distinctive and rare amongst Cornish villages.

Views

Excellent and long-sighted views from various locations including from the lane leading to the hamlet of Pendrift and from the 'new' A30 Road Bridge at Cardinham Downs where the views are also towards the open moorland at Trehudreth Downs .

Wind turbines visible on the far distant horizon and power lines just visible in the northern section of the landscape type.

Long views from Cassacawn lane towards St Bellarmin's Tor, south of the A30.

Also, from the new bridge over the A30 at Cardinham Downs there are fine views of Brown Willy and Roughtor in the distance.

Vistas and views from Blisland Village green across the Camel Valley.



Relationship to the Adjacent Character Types

Managed elevated farmland at Stokely and Cassacawn descends gently to either side of the valley at Waterloo.

Land at Cocks Penrose descends steeply to the valley at Lavethan Woods.

River Valleys - this includes the valley area known as Pendrift Bottoms (as marked on the map) which, however, has a distinct character within the Parish.

The surveys were taken from:

Old Chapel to Durfold
Waterloo to Stokely Farm
Waterloo to Lavethan
Pendrift Bottoms

Key Characteristics

- * Each valley has a boulder strewn stream running though it
- * An ancient landscape
- * Ancient woodland
- * Wildlife corridors; abundant flora and fauna
- * Tranquillity, pure air quality and unspoilt nature of the surroundings
- * The valleys have a geographically close association with local farms and pastureland
- * Lavethan Wood is designated as Ancient Woodland and as a County Wildlife Site
- * The Camel Trail runs along the south western boundary of the parish; once a railway line, this is now used as a cycling, walking and horse-riding trail from Wenford Bridge (near St Breward) to Padstow, and is a direct link from the parish to Bodmin, Wadebridge and Padstow. It also provides an alternative transport route to work for those looking to reduce their carbon footprint emissions.

Additionally, Pendrift Bottoms has:

- * Steep sheltered slopes leading down from the hamlet of Pendrift to valley bottom moor land area.
- * Wide open valley bottom with steep sides, distinctive within the parish
- * The northern side of the valley lies in the St Breward Parish
- * Important habitat for the Pearl Bordered Fritillary butterfly
- * Heavy cover of bracken on upper slopes, descending to sheltered cover of native trees at valley bottom(birch, oak and willow).

Topography and drainage:

The valley sides vary in steepness and direction, each has some areas of marshy land alongside the stream.

River water comes off the moor into the main river which acts as a drainage channel.

The Ham has a row of springs which feed into the river through the pond at Cassacawn Mill.

The field adjacent to the village shop was formed by quarrying activity.

At Pendrift Bottoms:

Upland rough ground descending steeply to full flowing De Lank river running through valley floor.

The bottom of the valley, at its lowest point, is 318.2 feet above sea level.

At Pendrift Bottoms -(con'td)

There are a number of marsh/boggy patches created by a number of streams that run down the slope to the valley.

The height of the settlement of Pendrift, which is the easiest access point to the valley is 544.6 feet above sea level.

Biodiversity

The valleys provide wildlife corridors, enabling, for example, many locally vulnerable species to move between high moor and valley floor. Some of these species are rare.

Ancient woodland with an abundance of lichen, ferns, fungi, mosses. The abundance of lichen indicates the purity of air quality in the area.

Native flowering plants in abundance at various times of the year. Invasive species: Himalayan balsam along the waterways.

The river has trout in it and otters with established territories. Both evidence the high oxygen content and purity of waters draining off the Moor.

Species of roe and red deer and pheasants use the diverse landscape cover that exists within the parish as their habitat/home.

At Pendrift Bottoms -

Covering of gorse and bracken that supports a species of violet that is a principal food source of the endangered Pearl Bordered Fritillary butterfly.

An abundance of lichen, ferns, fungi, mosses.

Native flowering plants in abundance at various times of the year.

Land Cover and Land use

Farmed grass pastureland and woodland alongside the waterways.

Isolated dwellings - farms and old mills now private dwellings.

Used for leisure with permissive footpaths.

At Pendrift Bottoms

The upper slope has rough grass, gorse, bracken, hawthorn, and a number of coniferous trees in single clumps.

Going down the slope there are longer grasses, rushes, bracken, birch, oak and willow.

Field and Woodland Pattern

Field size varies from approximately 8 to 30 acres.

Fields mostly bordered by Cornish hedges, stone-built walls with some hedges fenced in with post and wire fencing.

Woodlands vary in size, from scattered and unmanaged to Lavethan Woods which is managed by the Woodland Trust.

There are a number of Tree Preservation Orders; the Ham has a particularly large tree of some great age.

At Pendrift Bottoms

No ancient woodland or fields in the valley bottom itself but surrounded by small fields of permanent pasture on the ridge above.

All hedges around the fields are surface Cornish stone and earth banks.

Building Distribution

Small clusters and/or hamlets e.g. Waterloo.

Buildings and clusters visible across the valley.

Working farmhouses and outbuildings e.g. Stokely.

Isolated ex farmhouses converted to residential dwellings e.g., Somerton at Temple.

Historical buildings now residential dwellings e.g. Cassacawn, Lavethan, Trehudreth Mill, and Temple Methodist chapel.

The Farmhouses at Penstroda, Trethorne, and Wallhouse are all Grade Two Listed.

Temple Church at southern end of the Temple valley.



The settlement of Bradford.

The church of St Catherine at Temple at the southern end of the Temple Valley.

A Grade 2* listed building, it stands on land originally owned by the Knights Templar



At Pendrift Bottoms, there are no buildings. The nearest are in the hamlet of Pendrift that overlooks the valley.

Building Distribution

The Hamlets and Settlements in the River Valleys section

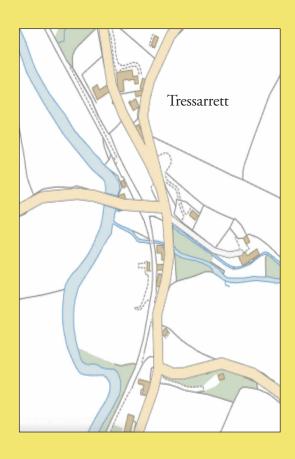
The Hamlet of Waterloo is to the south east of Blisland Village and has fourteen houses and the Blisland C.P. School.





The settlement of Bradford is to the north east of Blisland Village and, on the parish side, has nine houses.

The settlement of Tresarrett is to the west of Blisland Village and, on the parish side, has nine houses.



Transport Pattern

Country lanes at the boundaries of the valleys.

A number of signed public footpaths which create green corridors to the countryside linking different parts of the

parish and which provide healthy exercise to users of the paths.

Concrete farm track at Durfold. Small lane running to Temple church.

Evidence of numerous old drover tracks.

Historic Features

Industrial heritage:

There is a line of three Grade 2 listed ancient mills sited along the river, Trehudreth, Cassacawn, and Lavathen.

Remnants of mill leats especially alongside the bridlepath in the Ham.

Evidence of old china clay settling tanks at Durfold.

Durfold farmhouse was built in 1284.

Temple Church is Grade 2* listed.

Old Temple bridge is a scheduled monument.

At Pendrift, the area leading from the hamlet of Pendrift down to the valley was once a quarry.

Piled up quarried granite blocks remain dotted around the slopes.

Aesthetic and Sensory

Profound sense of peace. Minimal or no light pollution.

Natural auditory profile of birdsong and running water.

Occasional noise of aircraft from Bodmin airfield. Minimal traffic noise pollution from the A30.

A changing landscape and colour throughout the seasons.

Inspires adjectives such as 'rugged', 'unspoilt', 'natural'.

At Pendrift Bottoms:

Tranquil. Windswept. Barren during winter months.

Some machinery noise from the quarry opposite.

Rich in bird life.

Prevailing east wind.

No light pollution

Condition:

Lavethan wood is a designated Ancient Woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

The boundaries and fences of areas farmed by private/tenant farmers appear to be well maintained.

No evidence of fly tipping and minimal litter.

At Pendrift Bottoms, the area has an SSSI condition assessment of "Unfavourable recovering" i.e. the SSSI units are not yet fully conserved but all the necessary management measures are in place.

Provided that the recovery work is sustained, the SSSI will reach favourable condition in time.

Distinctive Features

Ancient trees, especially oaks and hollies.

Tree tunnel at Durfold.

No pylons or wind turbines, etc. in the valleys or visible from them.

Heritage buildings; industrial [mills]; Temple Church, ancient farmhouses.

Evidence of use of local granite in stiles, gate posts, small bridges, and boundaries.

At Pendrift Bottoms:

The valley is distinguished from other valleys in the parish by its wide, flat bottom, compared to the other valleys which are 'V' shaped.

The wide flat valley bottom has steep wooded sides on the northern extremity, splitting the parish from St Breward.

The river is fast flowing with mossy boulders.

Interspersed trees and bracken on steep valley sides in summer.

Views

The tors provide a distinctive silhouette against an extensive skyline, further emphasised by the lack of man-made structures and intrusive development.

At Temple there are wide ranging views across Shallow Water Common and uninterrupted views across to Hawks Tor, Rough Tor, and Brown Willy.

From Lavethan Woods there are glimpses through the trees to Blisland Church and along the valley to Lavethan Mill and Manor.

From Stokely Farm, the view south is towards St Bellarmin's and the moor, and north is down the sloping valley across open pasture land towards Blisland Village.

Views from Durfold through the trees along the valley floor, across open fields as path climbs beyond Durfold Farm.

At Pendrift, there are wide vantage points at the top of Pendrift Downs directly overlooking the valley and at Pendrift hamlet overlooking the area across to the quarry, opposite.

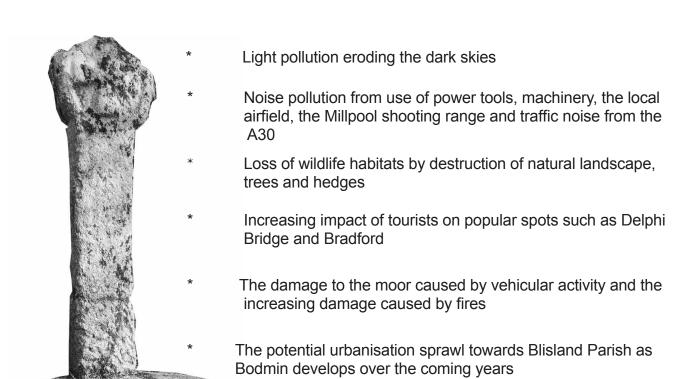
Long distance views towards the north coast.



The Mill Stream in Lavethan Woods

Pressure and Forces for Change applicable for all the Blisland Landscape Character Types

- * Removal of Cornish hedges to enlarge field sizes or where planning approval is given for a new development.
- * Loss of the skills to maintain and rebuild a traditional hedge
- * Suburbanisation of the rural character by cutting roadside verges and planting non-native and ornamental species in a rural setting
- * Erosion of Blisland Village Green by parked vehicles
- * Large agricultural buildings, enlarged field sizes and changes in the traditional management of farmland
- * Run off from farms / farmland increasingly contains contaminants e.g. (fertilisers) which reach sensitive stream and river systems
- * Increasing size of farm vehicles and implements, causing damage to old gateways, rural lanes and the road surfaces
- * New development out of keeping with the Parish's traditional built environment and infra structure
- * Increased traffic which could require unnecessary widening of country lanes, thereby having an undesirable effect on the ancient lane verges, boundaries and natural landscape that makes up Blisland Parish
- * Pressure on ancient bridges by size of vehicles
- * A progressive accumulation of modern structures including wind turbines, overhead cables, telecommunications masts and large solar arrays that cumulatively can produce a disproportionately adverse effect on the natural landscape



Pressure and Forces for Change applicable for all the Blisland Landscape Character Types



Loss of the skills to maintain and rebuild a traditional hedge.



Increasing size of farm vehicles and implements, causing damage to old gateways, rural lanes and the road surfaces.



Damage to the moor caused by agricultural vehicle activity.



Run off from farms / farmland which increasingly contains contaminants e.g. (fertilisers) which reach sensitive stream and river systems.



Pressure on ancient bridges by size of vehicles.



Increasing impact of tourists on popular spots such as Delford Bridge and Bradford and the damage caused by fire.

Landscape Management and Development Considerations

- * Development on high open ground or prominent ridges/sky lines should be avoided; detailed consideration needs to be given to the design of any such development
- * Given the high number of historic features and monuments in the parish, development should not dominate or prevent the understanding and appreciation of, such features
- * Ensure new features match the local vernacular using locally occurring materials, predominantly granite and slate
- * Design of new development should ensure additional light pollution is minimised
- * Ensure the 'settlement edge' demarcation is appropriately made using traditional materials to facilitate a satisfactory transition between the built environment / settlement and the open countryside
- * Soft landscaping of any new development should be required within the design layout and along its boundaries in order to maintain, strengthen and ensure the rural and countryside setting of the Parish. This should only use plants native to the area on outward facing boundary areas
- * Where possible, views out to the countryside should be integrated into future development for the benefit and wellbeing of residents
- * Access to the compact route of well-connected footpaths and public rights of way which link the different landscapes will need to be maintained
- * Hedges need to be repaired and maintained at the right time of year so as not to disturb nesting birds and ensure trees and key growth is not stripped or flailed
- * Training may be needed to retain these skills which are becoming scarce.

The Importance of the Local Landscape

Blisland is a parish of contrasting landscapes, from the wild, open, and sometimes desolate, high moors, which transition down to the wooded valleys and traditional moorland farmland.

However, all of these landscapes are characterised by quiet tranquillity and magnificent, long range views across unspoiled countryside.



The area around Blisland Village Green was designated a Conservation Area in 1997 and further details of this can be found in the Blisland Conservation Area Appraisal endorsed August 2007.

The lack of development means the parish is especially rich in nature conservation and important wildlife habitats, as well as extensive historical heritage.

It is also worth noting that it sits within the context of a wider North Cornwall landscape, providing important corridors for wildlife.

The parish is protected by designations of national significance in terms of landscape conservation.

The whole of the parish, with the exception of approximately 25% to the north west and south west, is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. (See Map on page 24)

The Cornwall AONB is protected by the planning system whereby a suite of national and local policies applies to ensure that the characteristics that make the AONB special are maintained for future generations.

The remaining 25% of the parish to the north west and south west is designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. (See Map on page 24)

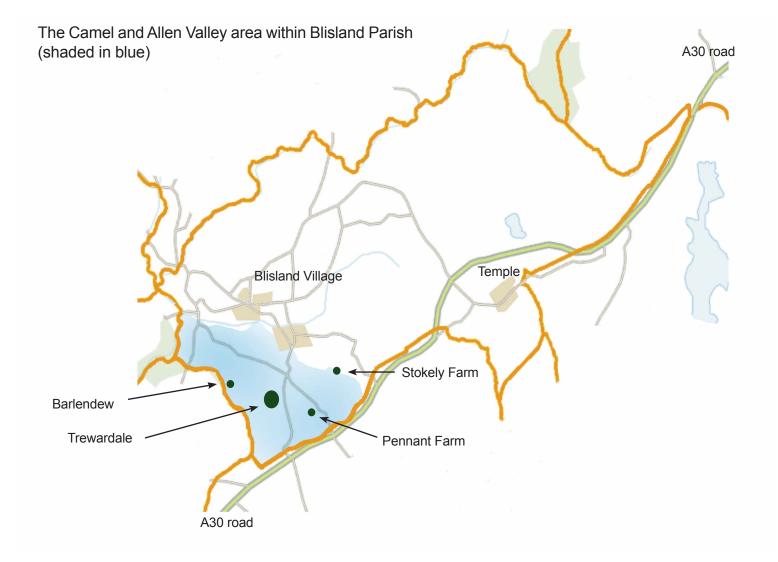
In addition, the extensive tracts of the open access moorland are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. (See Map on page 25)



The parish also sits within the International Dark Skies designation of Bodmin Moor, and recent light readings show the quality of the night sky above the moor is amongst the best in the world.

Surveys conducted in the parish as part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan preparation in 2016 and 2019 show that this is important to local people.

Page 27



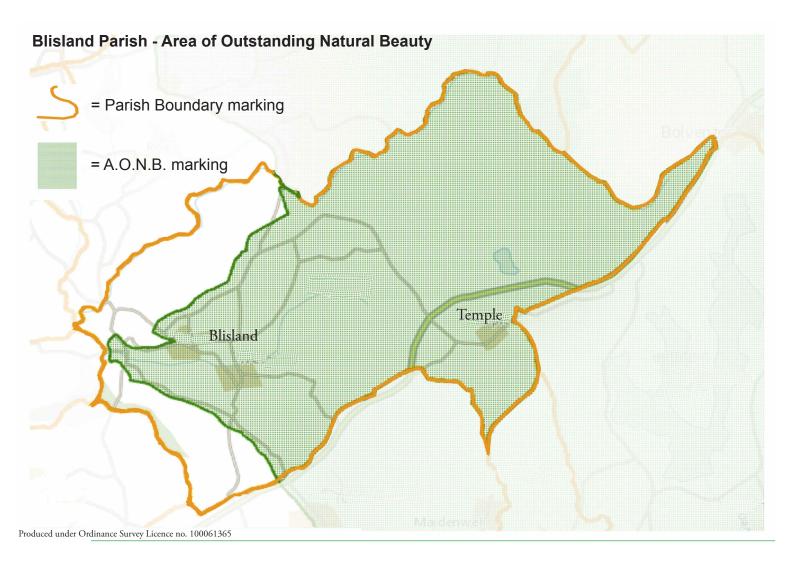
While most of the parish of Blisland lies within the Landscape Character Area of Bodmin Moor, a small portion of the south western edge of the parish overlies the Landscape Character Area of the Camel and Allen Valley. These Cornwall wide landscape areas were defined and described in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study (1995)

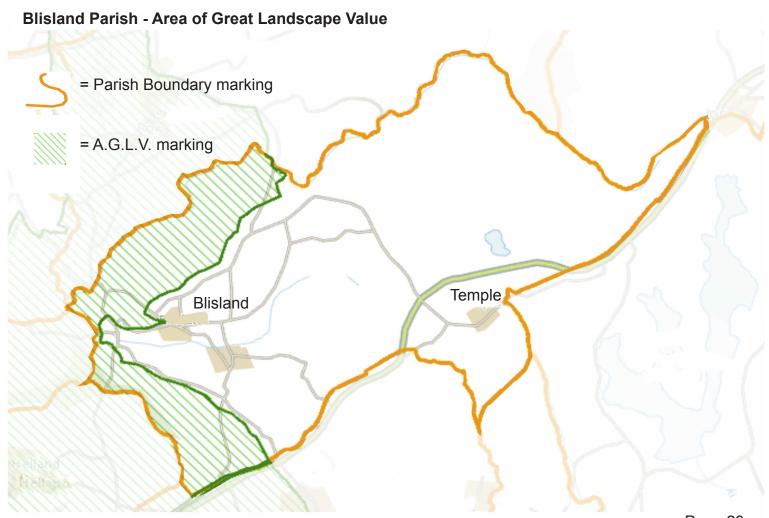
The Blisland Parish area which overlies the Camel and Allen Valley landscape area includes a section of the River Camel, the Camel Trail and surrounding woodland. The area also encompasses the farmland of Barlendew, Pennant and Stokely farms and the Trewardale Estate.

The Camel Valley area is defined by the river which cuts through the undulating plateau; the Camel River and its tributaries are a designated Special Area of Conservation (S.A.C.) Tributaries of the Camel can be seen throughout the parish including at Waterloo and Lavethan Woods.

The Camel valley area can be described as intimate and wooded with coniferous and mixed woodland featuring upland oakwood with sessile oak and upland mixed ash woods. The higher ground is dominated by estate farms with a mix of improved pasture and arable land within a medium scale field pattern of prominent Cornish hedges with few trees.

Upon review of descriptors of the area in the 1995 study, it can be argued that there has been little change to this landscape since that time; this reflects the value of this landscape for those who work and live within it.





Blisland Village Temple

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The large granite upland of Bodmin Moor is known to have exceptional preservation of archaeological remains. Over the years, the moor has been subjected to detailed archaelogical surveys and is one of the best recorded upland landscapes in England. The extensive relict landscapes of prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval date provide evidence of human exploitation of the Moor from the earliest prehistoric period onwards. The well-preserved and often visible relationship between settlement sites, field systems, ceremonial and funerary monuments, as well as later industrial remains, provides significant insights into successive changes in the pattern of land use through time.

Key:

- Medieval wayside cross in Blisland Village
- 2. Medieval wayside cross in Blisland Parish Churchyard, 10m. west of the Church
- 3. Medieval wayside cross in Blisland Parish Churchyard, 30m.east of the Church
- 4. St. Pratt's Cross, 330m. east of Blisland Parish Church
- 5. Stone crosses in the garden of Trewardale
- 6. Peverells Cross, a medieval wayside cross on the north side of the A30, nr. Trehudreth Downs
- 7. Barrow group on Greenbarrow Downs
- 8. Hut circle group and enclosure NE of Carwen
- 9. The Trippet Stones, a stone circle on Manor Common
- 10. The Stripple Stones, a stone circle and henge on Hawkstor Downs.

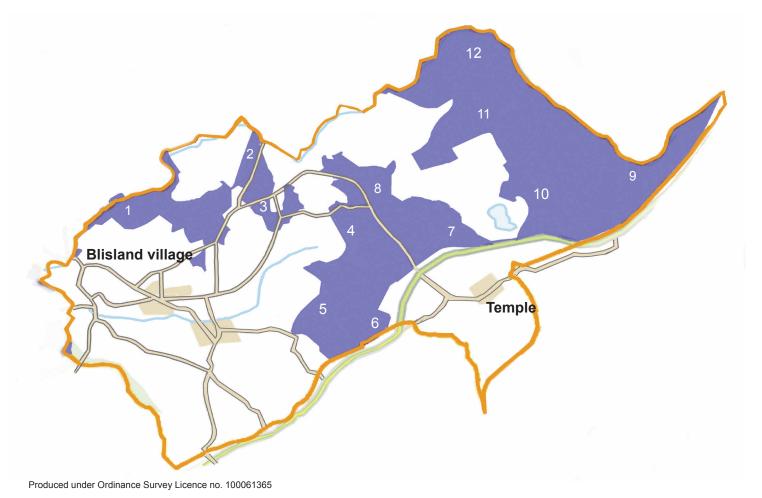
Blisland Parish - Sites of Special Scientific Interest



Parish boundary



Sites of Special Scientific Interest



A Site of Special Scientific Interest, normally known as an SSSI or 'Triple SI', is a formal conservation designation.

It describes an area that's of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains, or even important geological or physiological features that may lie within its boundaries.

In the Blisland Parish area, a large amount of the moor is designated as an S.S.S.I.

As indicated on the map, these are:

- 1. Pendrift Downs
- 2. Kerrow Downs
- 3. Metherin Downs
- 4. Newton Downs
- 5. Trehudreth Downs
- 6. Greenbarrow Downs

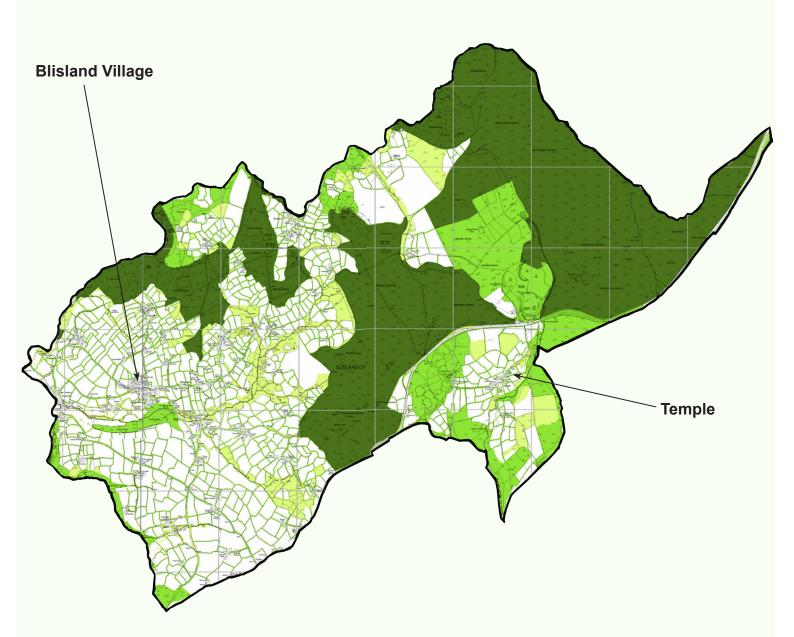
- 7. Menacrin Downs
- 8. Manor Common
- 9. Sprey Moor
- 10. Brockabarrow Common
- 11. Shallow Water Common
- 12. Scribble Downs.

The Blisland Parish Wildlife Resource Map



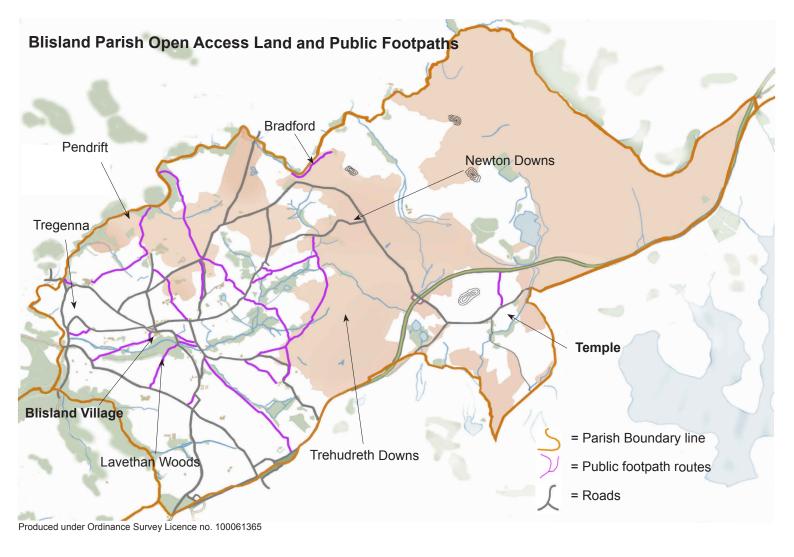
Semi-natural Habitat

No designation but still has wildlife value



'The lack of development means the parish is especially rich in nature conservation and important wildlife habitats as well as extensive historical heritage.

It is also worth noting that it sits within the context of a wider North Cornwall landscape, providing important corridors for wildlife'.





Blisland Parish has a network of footpaths which open up and link the various landscapes within the parish to residents and visitors providing benefits for healthy living and wellbeing.

For the most part, the paths follow ancient well trodden tracks, leading from farm to farm, or into the village from the outlying farms on the moors.

Another use for the paths would have been for the farming families to attend their Sunday worship at the Parish Church or the small Methodist chapels that would have been dotted around.

In the late 18th/early 19th century, there would have been a number of smaller chapels dotted around the moors, for the use of just a few families, as places of worship that evolved from use of moorland cottages. Thus the number of short connecting footpaths that led from one farm to another or to a local small chapel. As villages expanded, and incorporated hamlets, this led to larger central chapels being built, those we are familiar with today, although many are no longer used as chapels.

Maintenance of these footpaths is intensive, with stone stiles needing to be repaired, undergrowth being cleared and signs needing replacement on a regular basis.

The Relationship between the Blisland Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) and the Blisland Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

The Blisland Neighbourhood Development Plan places a strong emphasis on the need to protect the landscape. The overall objective of the plan is to ensure that any development respects and integrates into the designated landscape and open countryside. This is embedded in the policies as set out below:

The Blisland Neighbourhood Development Plan Landscape Objective

Blisland NDP Policy 9: Landscape Character

- * Proposals for development must demonstrate that they would not detract from, or have an adverse impact on, the landscape character of the parish that is defined in both the Cornwall Council Landscape Character Assessment for Bodmin Moor and in the Blisland Local Landscape Character Assessment
- * All woodlands should be protected and managed to sustain them in the long term and there will be strong resistance to any loss or encroachment. Where their loss cannot be avoided, suitable replacement woodland planting that will provide a similar landscape and wildlife benefit will be required.
- Where development is appropriate on the edge of a settlement, it should incorporate suitable landscaping, to avoid creating a hard and visually prominent edge.

Blisland NDP Policy 10: Dark Skies

To protect the Dark Skies designation and avoid light pollution within the parish, planning applications will need to illustrate how light pollution will be avoided /mitigated

Window design should seek to minimise the emission of damaging artificial light, and skylights should be avoided, wherever possible.

Street lighting and flood lights should be avoided as generally inappropriate. Light levels along pathways should be designed to be low level and directed downwards.

The Relationship between the Blisland Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) and the Blisland Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)- con'td

Blisland NDP Policy 11: Natural Environment

- * Development should avoid areas designated for their important species and habitats. Wildlife habitat features should, wherever possible, be retained and designed into developments. Measures to avoid any adverse impacts will be sought as a first principle.
- * Opportunities to build-in enhancements for wildlife should be maximized and can include:
- * Protection of Cornish hedges and the species they support from loss, damage and excessive lighting.
- * Provision for nesting birds, roosting bats, and hedgehogs.
- * Retention of wildlife corridors.
- * Where loss of habitat is unavoidable, any mitigation will be expected to enhance biodiversity.
- * Where removal of designated trees is unavoidable due to disease or other mitigating factors, a tree-planting scheme to replace the trees should be provided by the developer.

In addition to policies within the NDP, relevant national and Cornwall level policies include:

- * National Planning and Policy Framework Feb 2019, Chapter 15, 'Enhancing and Conserving the Natural Environment'
- * Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2016 2021 Policy: Managing Development