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Cover Illustration: Junction of Fore Street and Higher Fore Street courtesy of Kresen Kernow

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Adapted from an original layout by Tim Kellett



Redruth Garment Decorators Store, Upper Fore Street, Redruth

Using the guide

Introduction:

The Cornwall Shopfront Design guide was endorsed on 15 September 2017 as a Cornwall Council guidance document. It gives advice on the design of shopfronts, which contribute so much to the special character of Cornwall's settlements.

Special appendices such as this one for Redruth will be produced over time for selected towns and villages to give information on local distinctiveness. These can be produced by local Council's or partnerships.

Formal endorsement of this appendix is currently being progressed

Owners:

Do your research and find out what is the best design approach to suit your business and the building you are in.

Is the building listed, in a conservation area or does it have surviving historical features? Are you keen to get a more creative design?

Use the Shopfront Design guide, and for shops in Redruth, this appendix, to check your building and see a range of design options. Then choose the right designer for the job with proven experience in achieving the quality of work you need.

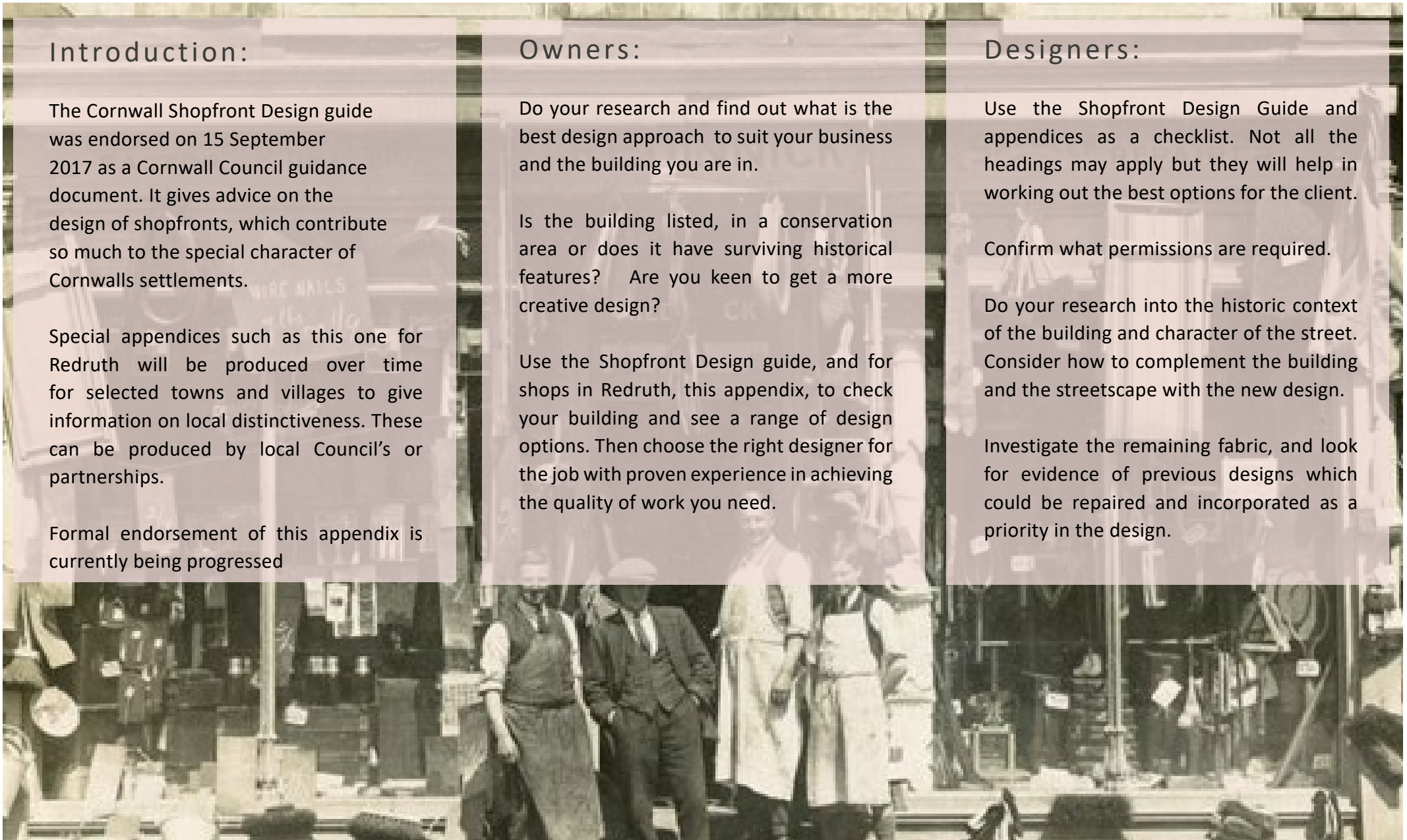
Designers:

Use the Shopfront Design Guide and appendices as a checklist. Not all the headings may apply but they will help in working out the best options for the client.

Confirm what permissions are required.

Do your research into the historic context of the building and character of the street. Consider how to complement the building and the streetscape with the new design.

Investigate the remaining fabric, and look for evidence of previous designs which could be repaired and incorporated as a priority in the design.



Introduction



17 Bond Street



Zen Nail and Beauty shop, 10 Fore Street

This guide is an appendix to the [Cornwall Shopfront Design Guide](#), so you must refer to that document for more detailed information on design options, technical advice and good examples.

It also complements the Redruth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategies for Redruth Town Centre, in particular, and Plain an Gwarry with more information on the heritage of the town and its future management.

Historically, shopfront designs were often based on the same principles and main components but they did vary tremendously in their detail. Again, the main Shopfront Design Guide will illustrate these.

We are looking here at some of the specific characteristics and opportunities in Redruth itself, so any work can be more relevant and locally distinctive. We should aim to restore the lost character of the retail core to ensure it is attractive and distinctive in order to be competitive, as well as increasing footfall and contributing to community pride.

The town centre can provide an alternative shopping environment of specialist, local and independent businesses mixed in with new commercial and community activities. In Redruth there are already specialist shops and a growing creative presence in the town which could be built upon. Connections to the past can be revived through repair and restoration. New attractions can be developed through restoration and the incorporation of innovative and locally distinctive detailing to strengthen the town centre as a destination.

Heritage assets: Conservation Area

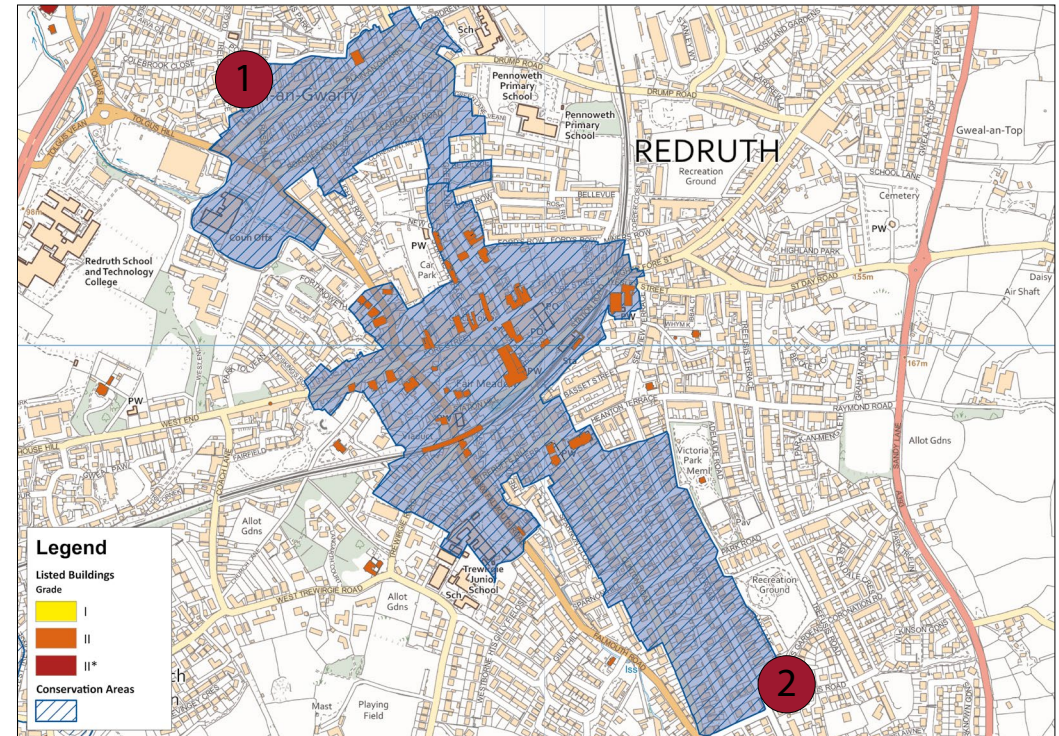
Redruth has two conservation areas, Plain an Gwarry (1) and Redruth Town Centre (2). Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies were produced for both conservation areas to help manage any changes in a positive way. Both Appraisal and Management Strategies were endorsed by Cornwall Council as a material consideration within the emerging Cornwall Council Development Framework by Cabinet on 24th April 2010.

Almost all notable shopfronts are located in the Town Centre Conservation area. The Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy includes the following proposed Actions relating to shopfronts (page 51):

- 'The notion of Redruth as a specialist retail centre should be explored in conjunction with a tourism strategy that emphasises the quality of the historic built environment and attractive topographical setting'
- 'Opportunities should be sought to convert or construct low-cost flexible premises for small businesses, perhaps in the creative/IT sectors. These might be located above shops, if satisfactory access can be gained'



© Kresen Kernow



Heritage assets: Listed buildings



There are many Listed Buildings in Redruth which can be viewed on the British Listed Buildings website. Many of those currently incorporate shopfronts or commercial frontages such as the buildings above in Falmouth Road(1).

Listed Building consent is required for any alteration that affects its character as a building of special interest. Clearly many of these deserve future restoration or enhancement work and a lot of original character has already been lost. There are also many unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area, including buildings of local interest, with shopfronts that still have historic merit. These are shown along with listed buildings on the map on the right.



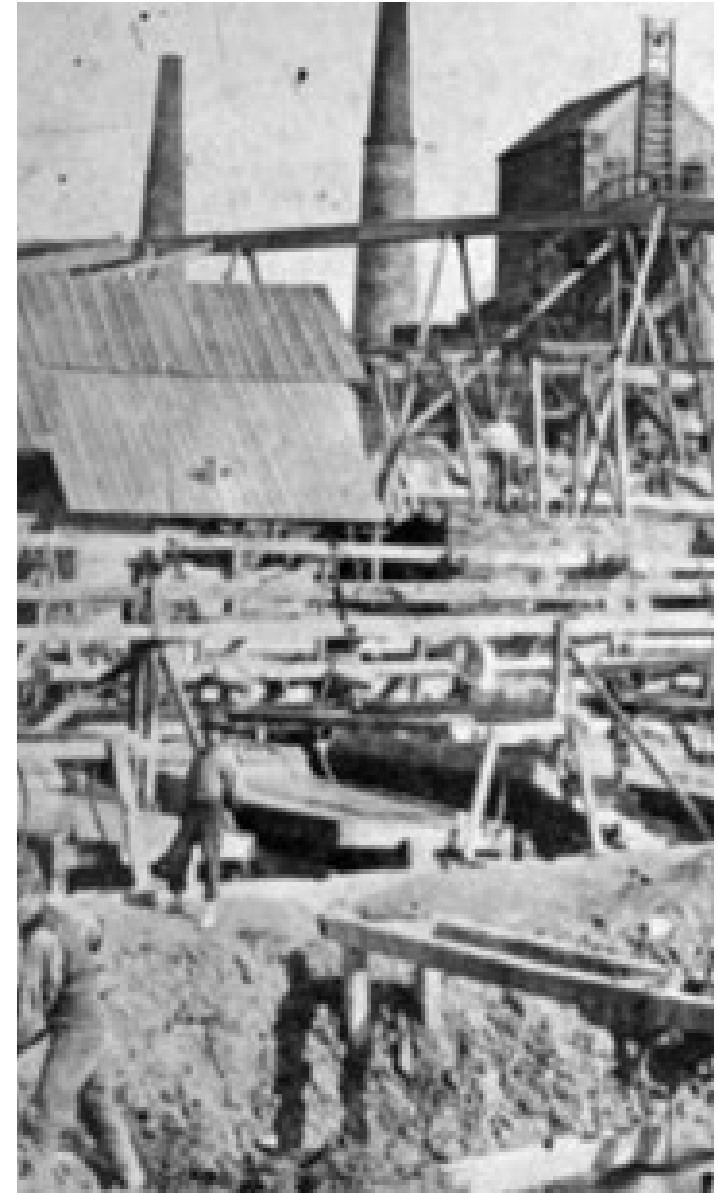
Heritage Assets: World Heritage Site

The development of industrialised mining in Cornwall between 1700 and 1914, and particularly the innovative use of the high-pressure steam beam engine, led to the evolution of an industrialised society, focused on mineral extraction, processing and allied industries.

This, in due course, had a profound impact on the growth of industrialisation in the United Kingdom, and consequently on industrialised mining around the world. Redruth is situated at the eastern end of a line of towns and villages which was the most heavily industrialised tin and copper mining district in Cornwall –the Central Mining District. Redruth's density of historic mining-related sites justifies it being part of the Outstanding Universal Value (international importance) of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (or Cornish Mining World Heritage Site).

Redruth has some fine Victorian architecture, a reflection of the prosperity of the town during this period, where monies derived from mining activities were invested to develop the town. The Mining Exchange (1) and offices of the mine stockbrokers Abbott and Wickett,(2) and the Gopeng Tin Mining Company, illustrate well the importance of the town in this regard in the latter 1800's. The town also retains many other impressive historic buildings, including its banks (3), and whilst not key attribute features as such, these served a community that enjoyed particularly close associations with the mining industry. A number of these are vacant and efforts are being made to create new uses for them. A detailed Historic England report on the town's historic banks is available (see page 21 Links). The architecture of the town also reflects the Cornish diaspora with impressive late-Victorian and Edwardian villas built on former mining ground in Clinton Road at a time when Redruth miners were prospering in South Africa.

Further information about policies relating to the World Heritage Site are included on page 20



Wheal Sparnon Mine - now Victoria Park
@ Royal Cornwall Museums 2021



Redruth as a Market Town

Redruth was a small market town which expanded in the eighteenth century through the boom in demand for copper ore from surrounding mines. Redruth quickly became one of the largest and richest mining areas in Britain and the town's population grew dramatically. The town later established a focus on the dealing of international mine shares-following the decline in local mineral production-and has since become known as the nineteenth century mining capital of the world.

Redruth and its market originated in the fourteenth century, following a charter granted in 1333. The medieval market was originally held in Fore Street, but later moved to Market Strand. A letter from a businessman visiting Redruth in 1778 extols the virtues of the Redruth Market:

'Oh, ye who never knew the joys, try it! Remember Redruth Market, there you can have it all in perfection and in no town in the kingdom is there greater abundance of quality'.

In 1791 Redruth Market was said to be 'by far the largest in the county', stretching from a market building near the site of the town clock and along Fore Street.

An indoor shopping arcade was created on the site of the former meat market as part of the Alma Place redevelopment in 1990's (1). This leads to the Buttermarket, redeveloped as part of Redruth High Street Heritage Action Zone, which has been trading since 1795 (2). A detailed Historic England Report is available (See page 21 Links)

Shops and markets are a key part of the town's historic development. The retention and reuse of remaining original shops, signs and buildings related to the town's historic links as a market town is critical to retain character and identity.



Rowe & Co, Fore Street, Redruth. Photo courtesy of the Paddy Bradley collection



1874-77 photo (Kresen Kernow, Corn02860)

Heritage Led Regeneration in Redruth



Redruth has had considerable investment in recent years. Key historic buildings in the town were renovated through a Historic England funded Town scheme (1988), Conservation Area Partnership scheme (1996-99) and a High Street Heritage Action Zone (2020 –24). High quality public realm improvements funded through SWRDA and English Partnerships were carried out to co ordinate with the Conservation Area Partnership improvements. Kresen Kernow, a state of the art archive centre was opened in 2019. It was built with funding from National Lottery Heritage Fund and Cornwall Council in the shell of the town's former brewery and contains the worlds largest collection of documents, books and maps and photographs relating to Cornwall's history. Krowji, home to Creative Kernow, opened in 2015. It is Cornwall's largest creative hub, providing studios and workshops for a wide range of creative businesses at a repurposed former grammar school on the edge of the town centre.

The link with the creative industries sector is growing in the town centre. There is a growing cluster of businesses at the bottom of Fore Street including an Art Room in Knights Arcade and a pottery and gallery in Tower House. With the historic art colonies of St Ives, Newlyn and Falmouth becoming less affordable Redruth town centre is seeing the repurposing of vacant premises as studios, workspace and retail linked to the creative economy. 'Make a Mends' at the junction of Fore Street and Penryn Street is an innovative 'upcycling' venue that uses creative ways to repurpose materials or give a broken item a new lease of life. Other charity shops in the town also offer recycling opportunities which are valuable in the current cost of living and climate crisis.

Core values from Redruth's recently produced brand filter including making the town:

- Distinctively Cornish (an independent, but not exclusive affordable, modern, creative and progressive Cornish town that works for everyone)
- Resourceful and Regenerative (embracing a repurposed economy, being resilient, adaptable and creating own solutions to society's big issues)
- Sparking Ideas (building on the spark that lit Murdoch's first gas lamp, being innovative and progressive, young voices driving purposeful change)

These values work well with shopfronts, signs and historic building frontages in the town. Original detail could be restored and maintained but innovation and spark could be added to new signs and shopfronts.

What makes Redruth special

Redruth was pivotal in the history of Cornish mining. As mines prospered, those benefiting had considerable disposable income to spend. This is reflected in the quality of shops that were created in this time. The most notable remaining shopfronts are those for the Drapers on West End, with curved glass shop display windows and gilt glass signs (1).

Redruth's shopfronts have a number of characteristics which make them significant:

- A lot of quality original shopfronts remain, many with unaltered original windows and detailing to upper stories above. Curved glazing bars and curved glazing to shopfronts are a distinctive feature (2).
- Glass and gilt signs: gilded incised 3D wooden letters covered with a reverse painted sheet of glass or reverse gilded glass (1).
- Many original entrance mosaics to shops still remaining incorporating former shop names (see page 11).
- Predominantly Victorian shopfronts with some later examples, such as on Bond Street, which reflect the aspirations of the 1920's with features such as sunburst motifs (3).
- Links to tin and copper mining.
- A vibrancy which reflect that of the community and town's history.
- Good variety of independent shops including specialist shops, creative uses and affordable studios and workspaces.



Redruth Drapery Stores, East End. These incised, gilded letters were originally covered by a sheet of reverse painted glass. @ Historic England, James Davies 2021



Original shopfronts



Many high quality original shopfronts remain, reflecting Redruth's former prosperity. These add significant character to the conservation area and bring in footfall. A number still retain original detailing to upper stories above the shopfront (1). Some are vacant and underused however (1,4), and a number in need of maintenance and repair (3,4). Key principles for the town's shopfronts are:

- No more loss of historic fabric. Owners and designers should examine the buildings and identify any historic features.
- Repairing historic shopfront features as a priority and incorporate into new shopfronts. Use long lasting paint to reduce maintenance periods. Ensure upper stories are well maintained and rainwater discharge is functioning correctly so as not to cause damage to the shopfronts below.
- Do not cover over historic features with new signs or panels.
- Reinststate characteristic features such as projecting cornices, framed fascias, pilasters, console brackets and curved glazing bars.



Signage

- Original signage is often concealed under more recent signage and can be easily revealed. Exposing this signage, such as on the former Redruth Drapery Store, West End (1), often enhances the quality of the shopfront and building regardless of the current use.
- Glass and gilt signs and reverse gilded glass seen in the West End Stores building (2) gives distinctive character and should be preserved and revealed where evident.
- Glazed and reverse painted leaded glass such as on the former Whittaker building, Fore Street (3), is a distinctive feature and should be preserved on glazing where it exists and incorporated on new shopfront glass if possible.
- Lettering spaced away from the fascia to give a three dimensional feel such as on 'Hatter's, Fore Street (4) can work well.
- New shop signage in the town centre should be of a high quality, whether traditional or contemporary (5 and 6). Some recent signage on town centre shops is poor, detracting from the shop and building. Refer to the Cornwall Shopfront Design guide's section on signage (pg 9).



Mosaic shop entrances

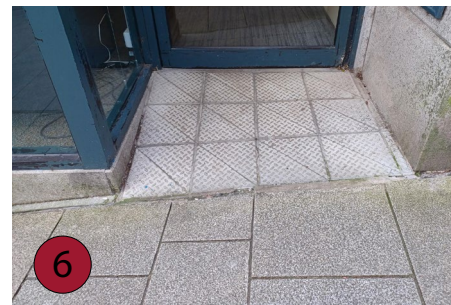


Issues

- High quality original shopfront entrance mosaics still remain on many town centre shops, sometimes internally (1 to 4).
- Fore Street is very steep and any level access solution to a shop needs to be carefully detailed. Some recent level access solutions to shops are fairly bland and detract from the quality of the shopfront (5 to 7).

Opportunities

- Original shopfront entrance mosaics should be maintained and repaired, if required, as they are a key feature in the town. These mosaics should be regularly cleaned.
- New mosaic entrances could be introduced as part of any new or improved shopfront. A new entrance mosaic at Regal Cinema as part of Redruth HERS scheme (8) and engraved granite slabs at opeway entrances as part of the streetwork improvements (9) are good references for future work.



Issues

Issues

- Redruth still retains many architecturally impressive buildings with original shopfronts still retaining original detailing and character (1,2 and 3,6). Some inappropriate alterations are creeping in however, and some shopfronts and high level detailing above are poorly maintained. Missing and defective guttering, for example, could cause damage to the shopfront below.
- Vacancy and underuse of some shops and upper stories above shops (3,5).
- Level access detailing to shops in Fore Street (See page 15).
- Lack of coordination in detailing where more than one shopfront installed on same building (See page 14).
- Many original shops have recessed entrances which could potentially encourage rough sleeping and anti social behaviour (3,5).



Opportunities



Opportunities

- Promote appropriate timber repairs and finishes and regular maintenance of historic buildings.
- Regular annual spring clean to remove vegetation from gutters.
- Repair and maintain entrance mosaics and use these as a reference for new entrance mosaics on existing shops (See page 11).
- Carry out vacancy survey, investigating causes, and assess opportunities for creating living accommodation and offices over shops.
- Promote quality artistic and decorative metal grills, if required on recessed shop entrances and for security (Some current examples are shown in 1 and 2).
- More cafes and restaurants could create outdoor seating areas such as those at bottom of Fore street (3 and 4).
- Coordinate shopfront improvements where multiple shops exist on same building (See page 14).
- Reveal and expose any covered shop signage and install quality new signage (traditional or contemporary) as part of any shopfront improvement (See page 10).
- Build on specialist shops and new creative uses in Fore Street (5,6,7).
- Use Cornwall Shopfront Design guide to inform detailing on new or improved shopfronts.
- Investigate Conservation Partnership or Management Agreements for some areas.



Opportunities for co-ordinated solutions

Differing shopfront detailing, fascia and signage depth, and colour schemes often look clumsy on buildings with multiple shopfronts below.

A number of opportunities exist to bring owners or tenants together to try and co ordinate shopfronts and signage.

Examples include:

- 75 and 77 Fore Street (1)
- 84 and 84a Fore Street (2)
- 2-4 Bond Street (3)
- 2, 3, 4 Alma Place (4)
- 72 Upper Fore Street (5)
- 23-24 Fore Street (6)
- 9-10 Fore Street (7)
- 10, 16, 17 Chapel Street (8)



Fore Street



Issues

- High quality shops remain, but need for maintenance to shops and upper stories. Historic photos show many south facing shops had awnings and blinds.
- Very steep high quality pedestrianised main street, care needed with level access to shops (1).
- Narrow opes and recessed entrances could present potential security and anti social behaviour issues.
- Some vacant buildings and many underused upper stories (2 and 6).

Opportunities

- Regularly repair and maintain historic buildings and shopfronts and ensure any new shopfront designs and signs are of the highest quality (traditional or contemporary) informed by the Cornwall Shopfront Design guide.
- Indoor/outdoor space and outdoor seating opportunities, especially on South facing properties. Opening concertina windows at Regal Café work well (3).
- Repair and maintain any original mosaic shop entrances and install better quality level access solutions where required, using new mosaic tiling if possible.
- Install artistic and decorative quality metal gates and shutters where required.
- Investigate opportunities of coordinating improvements to shopfronts where more than one exist on the same building (4). Well designed central double doors could give an opportunity of splitting larger shops to two units (2).
- Investigate new uses for vacant buildings such as conversion of former bank (5) and progress schemes for living and workspace/offices over the shops.



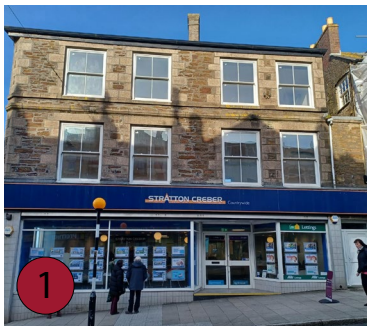
Upper Fore Street

Issues

- Footfall potentially reduced to the top end of the street through distance from main street.
- Steep extension to Fore Street but with traffic (3).
- Some poor signage and window graphics creeping in (5).
- Underused upper storeys (1) and evidence of repairs needed on some buildings and shopfronts (6)

Opportunities

- Repair and enhance good quality shopfronts and signs, especially at top end of street.
- Encourage more specialist shops, such as Antique shops, at top end of street (4,7).
- Ensure upper stories are well maintained to protect shopfronts below.
- Coordinated schemes with complementary shopfront detailing, colour and signage (2,8).



Bond Street



Issues

- Bond Street is a bit outside the town's main shopping core
- A number of shops are currently vacant (2, 5, 7)
- A few unsympathetic alterations (3) and windows (7) above shops have crept in. These detract from the quality of the shopfront below as well as the generally unaltered street. Any changes to the external appearance of shopfronts, windows and doors may require planning permission (see page 20)

Opportunities

- Specialist shops could be encouraged
- Most shops have separate front entrances to upper stories which will help keeping upper stories in use, possibly through live/work (5,6,7)
- The quality of remaining traditional shopfronts is high. In many cases original doors to upper stories and windows above remain unaltered. All original detailing should be retained, repaired and regularly maintained. The 1920's sunburst motifs on fanlights to some shops and doors are particularly distinctive (3, 4 and 7)
- The quality unaltered nature of the buildings on the street would lend itself to an occasionally pedestrianised or 'shared space' scheme to allow outdoor seating etc (1).
- Reinstating original windows and doors on some buildings would help retain the character of the street
- Investigate Conservation Partnership or Management Agreement and buildings of local interest resurvey



West End



Issues

- Busy steep street, often with idling traffic at junction. Noise and fumes could be an issue for shops.
- Limited commercial use for a number of shops through location outside shopping core and lack of on street parking.
- Security issues for shopfronts with large glazed panes and curved glass and low level glazed panes.
- Poor quality signage and deteriorating upper storey detailing above shops at junction with Falmouth Road (4).
- No 13 in danger of being lost without urgent repairs (6).

Opportunities

- Exposed Redruth Drapery signage a key feature and should be retained and maintained. Better quality window graphics would significantly improve the appearance of the shopfront (3).
- The cills of the former Drapery Stores sit slightly above pavement level and should be regularly checked and if required repaired (2).
- Assess condition of 'At Risk' buildings opportunities (4,6).
- Retain any original shopfront detailing in shopfronts (5).



Penryn Street / Falmouth Road

Issues

A major busy entrance to Redruth that is many people's first impression of the town. Fire damage has resulted in demolition and deterioration of buildings to the junction of Penryn Street with Station Hill (3).

No's 10,11 and 12 Penryn Street (1), opposite the road junction with Station Hill, are important historic buildings in the conservation area with good traditional shopfronts and distinctive curved shopfront detailing and original upper storey detailing intact. The shopfronts and upper storey windows on this group of buildings are deteriorating fast and shops are vacant and underused. The street is in the flood zone which might impact the use of the shopfronts.

Opportunities

- Urgent and comprehensive repairs are needed to many shopfronts and upper storey windows in Penryn Street.
- Shops are outside of the main shopping core and sensitive solutions retaining shopfronts but creating residential accommodation behind may be worth investigating if flooding issues can be overcome. The Cornwall Shopfront Design Guide gives examples of how this could be achieved (page 17).
- Shopfront detailing, colour schemes and signage could be co-ordinated on Tower House (2).



Permissions Legislation and Policy

Permissions

Any alteration to the design, or the erection of a new shopfront requires Planning Permission. Routine maintenance works such as redecoration or straightforward repairs do not require permission. Signage often forms part of the shopfront, and requires a separate application for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of advertisements) Regulations 2007.

Alterations to Listed Buildings require Listed Building Consent under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Any such alterations, including minor ones, should consider the importance and style of the building. Large scale details and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). Should be provided with the application.

Further advice on works to historic buildings can be found here: [Advice for works to historic buildings - Cornwall Council](#)

For further advice and guidance contact the Historic Environment Planning Team: [hep@ Cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:hep@Cornwall.gov.uk).

Local Plan:

Policy 12, Design: The Council is committed to achieving high quality, safe, sustainable and inclusive design in all developments. Development must ensure Cornwall's enduring distinctiveness and maintain and enhance its distinctive natural and historic character.

Policy 24, Historic Environment: Development proposals will be permitted where they would sustain the cultural distinctiveness and significance of Cornwall's historic, rural, urban and coastal environment by protecting, conserving and where appropriate enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated assets and their settings.

The Redruth Neighbourhood Development Plan:

At the time of writing the NDP had not been adopted. Policies in the NDP should be referred to.

The World Heritage Site :

The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (inscribed in 2006) is a designated heritage asset of international importance. World Heritage Sites are recognised within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as heritage assets of the highest significance. Additionally, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 has enacted changes to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that now places a statutory requirement upon planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing World Heritage Sites as relevant designated heritage assets. The WHS Management Plan sets out a number of policies which are relevant to this guide:

P3:Planning authorities will ensure that new development protects, conserves and enhances the site and its setting.

C2:New development will add to the quality and distinctiveness of the site by being of high-quality design and respectful of setting.

C3:There will be a presumption in favour of retaining and reusing historic buildings which are important components of the site, where this does not adversely affect outstanding universal value.

PN2:The World Heritage Site should be interpreted as a distinctive, evolving and living landscape.

T3:The distinctiveness of Cornish mining culture should be celebrated, promoted and propagated.

Links

Click the **red** headings below to link to the webpages

Cornwall Shopfront Design Guide

The parent document to this appendix with comprehensive design guidance on shopfronts

Redruth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategies (CAAMP)

The Appraisal highlights the special character of each conservation area while the Management Strategies propose actions to protect this special character. Both reports are formally endorsed by Cornwall Council and used as a reference for planning applications.

Redruth Town Centre (CAAMP)

Plain-an-Gwarry (CAAMP)

Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey (CSUS)

A framework for sustainable regeneration carried out in 19 towns across Cornwall (2002-2005). The reports improve understanding and characterisation of the distinctive historic quality of each town and identify heritage led regeneration opportunities.

Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative (Redruth and Plain-an-Gwarry)

An analysis carried out on 50 Cornish settlements between 1998 and 2004 which give an overview of each towns history, present character and importance.

Redruth High Street Heritage Action Zone

A £1.6 million Historic England Grant scheme (2020-2024), includes links to Historic England reports; 'The historic bank buildings of Redruth' and the Buttermarket.

Cornwall's Historic Environment Strategy (2022-2030)

World Heritage Site Management Plan

Redruth Old Cornwall Society