

6 Godrevy to Portreath

Also known as 'North Cliffs'

Location

The coast of this AONB section contains some dramatic scenery and extends from north of Camborne between the higher ground of Navax Point in the west, to the lower Tregea Hill, extending from Portreath in the east to the Red River to the south and west.

Extent

The total area is approximately 650 hectares (just under 6.47 square kilometres) and constitutes one percent of the Cornwall AONB.

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Assessment 2005-2007

Character Areas: CA11 Redruth Camborne and Gwennap; CA 28 North Coast – Reskeadge Downs.

Statement of Significance

Locally, this stretch is referred to as 'North Cliffs' and is best known for its sheer cliffs of unstable, soft, gritty slate - constantly eroded by the unrelenting power of the Atlantic Ocean, as seen at Hell's Mouth and Hudder Cove. In stark contrast, just inland, the terrain turns from coastal heath to more recently enclosed farmland and further on to a quiet wooded valley. The mainly inaccessible coves provide critical habitat for grey seals, which can be readily seen from the cliff tops above.

The landform is curious in that it slopes southward away from the coast to the valley of the Red River, so named from the mining waste (rich in iron oxide) that washed into it over the centuries turning it a rusty red colour. It now runs clear although the orangey traces of iron oxide can still be seen on the riverbed. The Red River forms the boundary of the AONB on the landward side and provides a sheltered environment with deciduous and mixed woodland, which contrasts with the exposed cliff tops seen from the coastal road.

Godrevy Point marks the westerly boundary of the AONB and has much gentler westward facing slopes, which dip down to a rocky shoreline. On the small island off the Point stands the iconic Godrevy Lighthouse, built in 1859 to warn ships off the treacherous Stones Reef. The Lighthouse was fully automated in 1934 and has a range of twelve miles out to sea.

The headland at Godrevy contains important archaeological remains from the Mesolithic

period onwards with evidence of various settlements.

On the flatter land slightly further east and inland, larger scale fields of regular pattern provide a more open aspect where the Red River valley provides suitable shelter for the ancient Sessile Oak woods of Tehidy Country Park with its lakes and woodland walks, providing an attractive destination for visitors and residents alike.



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Management

- The National Trust manages most of the coastal land including car parks, a cafe, toilets and the access road to Godrevy Head. Coastal Heathland benefits from a Shetland ponies grazing scheme.
- Gwinear-Gwithian and Illogan are currently in the process of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Cornwall Council manages Tehidy Country Park providing educational and environmental activities.
- The Towans Partnership provides a forum to discuss and address local issues including those within the AONB.
- Cornwall Biodiversity Initiative aims to link up non-designated sites (broadleaved valley woodlands).
- The AONB coastline is included in the Godrevy Head to St Agnes SSSI.
- Cornwall Council owns and manages St Gothian Sands Local Nature Reserve on the western boundary of the Red River.



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1. Hell's Mouth
2. Tehidy Country Park

Condition

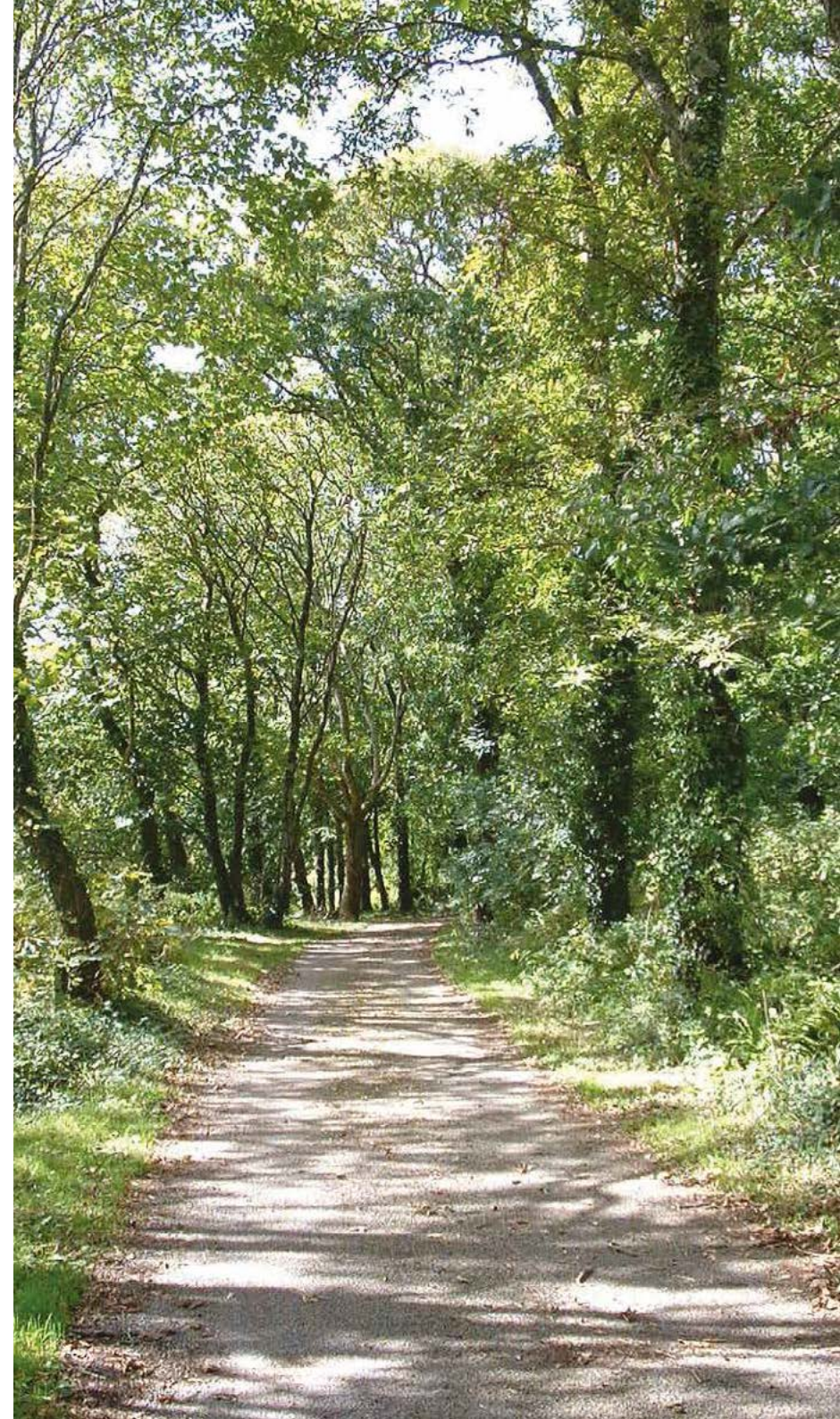
- Some existing visitor development within the AONB at Godrevy and Hell's Mouth is out of character.
- The access road to the car park at Godrevy Point is vulnerable to further coastal erosion and has the potential to be severed over the lifetime of the Plan.
- The Red River Valley outside the Tehidy Country Park requires effective management to avoid colonisation by sycamore.
- The Godrevy to Portreath section of the AONB benefits from the greatest proportion of SSSI land in 'favourable' condition.
- Invasive scrub growth on coastal rough ground.
- Modern development on the valley slopes rising out of Portreath and older housing around Portreath harbour impacts significantly upon the setting of the AONB on the western side of the A3301 on the western side of the valley, particularly where gaps have been filled between existing inappropriate developments on the hillside.



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1. Male, female and juvenile seals near Godrevy - Sue Sayer www.cornwallsealgroup.co.uk
2. Tehidy Woods

2.



Godrevy to Portreath Local Policies

- GP6.01 Seek measures for the enhancement of the appearance of visitor developments and their setting at Godrevy and Hell’s Mouth consistent with local vernacular for example, including use of locally characteristic Cornish killas in hedging and walling and granite detailing.
- GP6.02 Encourage better connectivity into the AONB from Camborne, Pool and Redruth, through the provision of green infrastructure and sustainable transport links. Include these in any proposals for urban expansion at Camborne, Pool, Illogan, Redruth (CPIR) and Hayle.
- GP6.03 Seek protection of undeveloped and sparsely settled rural character and open views, free of tall structures. Seek a reduction in the visual impact of overhead cables by undergrounding, for example along the B3301.
- GP6.04 Seek the conservation and enhancement of the rural character of all lanes and roads including the B3301 through the retention of hedges, narrow winding character and low levels of signage.
- GP6.05 Support the removal of the car park at Godrevy Point in the light of the anticipated future severance of the access road by the sea and restore the headland to natural coastal habitats.
- GP6.06 Seek improvement in the landscape integration of all locations used for visitor car parking including those at Godrevy and along the B3301 and North Cliffs.
- GP6.07 Seek use of locally characteristic slate in new stiles and steps and other rights of way works in a manner consistent for example with those found near Godrevy Point in order to reinforce local character along the coast path and other footpaths. Consider new design solutions that enhance access for those with mobility impairments.
- GP6.08 Increase awareness and promote a sense of ownership and responsibility for the AONB among the communities of nearby settlements including Camborne, Pool, Redruth, Illogan, Hayle, and Portreath.
- GP6.09 Support measures to reduce anti-social behaviour such as littering, fly tipping, camping, fires and dumping of cars at coastal car parks such as Tehidy North Cliffs, Godrevy and smaller informal parking along the B3301.
- GP6.10 Support the work of the Towans Partnership and the delivery of the objectives of the Towans Management Plan where these support the purposes of the AONB designation.
- GP6.11 Encourage measures to sensitively manage the seal haul at Godrevy, balancing people’s enjoyment and education against disturbance to the seals, working with the Cornwall Seal Group.
- GP6.12 Help to support coastal management, which promotes natural processes wherever possible and support initiatives with communities which consider the long term future of Portreath in respect to predicted effects of sea level rise and increased storminess. Seek to support the delivery of appropriate measures to ‘hold the line’ and ‘manage realignment’ as identified in the Shoreline Management Plan, where they conserve or enhance the landscape character and natural beauty of the AONB. Conserve the undeveloped nature of the coast away from settlements.
- GP6.13 Encourage the growth of Portreath to meet local needs in ways that do not adversely impact upon the AONB and its setting. Guard against cumulative impacts of development on the valley side, west of the A3301, within the AONB including the infilling of gaps between existing individual dwellings, which are themselves already adversely impacting upon the AONB in terms of scale, siting, design, massing and materials.



Godrevy Lighthouse - Ben Church