

## SECOND OPINION

### Redruth, Pool and Camborne



Each week we ask a prominent regeneration practitioner or commentator to assess a recently published masterplan. This week Richard Alvey reviews masterplan for Redruth, Pool and Camborne in Cornwall.

**Background:** The towns of Redruth and Camborne (above) are linked by the village of Pool. The conurbation was once at the heart of the industrial revolution, when two-thirds of the world's copper was produced in Cornwall. Pool was home to the UK's last working tin mine, South Crofty, which shut in 1997. Urban designer Llewelyn Davies has drawn up an urban framework to turn round the fortunes of an area blighted by abandoned shop units and high unemployment.



Richard Alvey

This people-centred account provides a lively impression of a vital and prosperous new era for the three towns.

The UFP provides a robust framework for the revitalisation of the area through the creation of a series of inter-reliant, sustainable mixed-use neighbourhoods of differing scales and activities. Within the context of an integrated approach, focused on a public transport spine, the UFP seeks to reinforce the identity of the three towns, which has been rather lost over the past century, through a clear definition of their respective roles and the proposed focal points of activity.

Coherent area framework plans are provided for each of the three centres, picking up the best practice principles set out earlier in the UFP, in terms of access, integration, permeability and defining the urban fabric. They also present ways in which Cornish tradition and history could be successfully expressed.

Not surprisingly, sustainability principles underpin the UFP and are explored in the design code, which includes a checklist of renewable energy issues and a series of environmental projects. The code is, however, the only element of the plan which appears a little out of sync, in that it precedes the area framework plans, rather than supporting them. The code could also, perhaps, have made more of the intriguing Cornish design solutions which are illustrated.

The UFP is strong on public consultation, adopting a comprehensive approach, and significantly the consultant team imaginatively engaged local secondary school pupils, a group often unrepresented in the consultation process. The outcome of this consultation is reflected in the UFP, particularly in the proposals for finer grain local leisure and recreation provision.

A key issue is whether the development proposals will result in the social and economic benefits envisaged in the strategy. Undoubtedly, the UFP provides a good framework, including a range of environmental enhancement measures and transport proposals aimed at improving the area's accessibility. Given that the necessary financial resources are likely to be available from European Objective 1 regional aid and other sources there is a good chance that this physical infrastructure will be put in place. As for attracting investment in jobs, a lynchpin of the strategy, only time will tell whether the proposed urban regeneration company for Camborne, Pool and Redruth can deliver the goods.

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