

WHITEHEAD PLANNING

Town Planning Consultancy

Planning Statement

**Demolition of Existing Dwelling and Construction of
Replacement dwelling**

at

**Beach View (formerly known as Dormers), Mawgan Porth,
Newquay**

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RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

1. Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Peter Whitehead. I am a planning consultant, and have traded under the name 'Whitehead Planning' since setting up in private practice in 2008. I have nearly 30 years of professional experience of town planning, having been continuously employed in the discipline since 1989. I am a chartered town planner and Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI).
- 1.2 I am instructed by Mr and Mrs C Heritage, owners of Beach View (formerly known as Dormers), in this matter.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Statement is to provide information in support of a planning application proposing the demolition and replacement of a single dwelling known as Dormers. In summary:
1. It provides a brief overview of the site and proposals;
 2. It provides a précis of current local and national planning policies that have a bearing on the consideration of the application;
 3. It provides a review of the key planning issues upon which consideration of the application will primarily turn; and,
 4. It draws some brief conclusions regarding the proposal.
- 1.4 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the other components of the application, amongst these the Design & Access Statement/Design Booklet and drawings prepared by ARCO2 Architects.

2. The Site and Proposals

- 2.1 Beach View (formerly known as Dormers) comprises a dormer bungalow situated in the coastal village of Mawgan Porth, near Newquay.

- 2.2 The property appears to have been built in the mid 20th Century and is dated both in terms of its construction and its design and appearance, representing a placeless form of architecture that does little to reflect or reinforce local character. Moreover, the existing dwelling is sited towards the eastern side of what is a very generous plot and fails to take advantage of the stunning sea views that would be offered by a dwelling sited further to the west.
- 2.3 ARCO2 Architects' Design & Access Statement/Design Booklet and plans provide a very detailed discussion of the proposals and it is not my intention to duplicate the information set out therein. However, in brief, the proposals involve the demolition of the existing dwelling and the construction of a replacement dwelling of high-quality contemporary and sustainable design and construction, specifically a part single-storey, part two-storey dwelling. The replacement dwelling will feature a living green roof, and be externally clad with a mixture of stone, timber and copper. It will be sited towards the west of the plot in order to capitalise on views of the beach and coast. Car parking accommodation will be provided in the form of integral garaging and additional 'grasscrete' parking spaces.
- 2.4 This proposal has been the subject of pre-application discussions with Cornwall Council's planning officers, ref. PA17/01681/PREAPP. The Council's encouraging response, dated 26th July 2017, has helped inform the proposal now tabled and will be referenced further in the body of this Statement, below. Pre-application discussions have also been undertaken with the Parish Council, including a presentation of the proposals at the meeting of Mawgan in Pydar Parish Council on 14th February 2018.

3. The Development Plan and Other Material Considerations

3.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out the presumption that planning applications be determined in accordance with the policies of the development plan unless other material considerations dictate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012 introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14) stating:-

*“...For **decision-taking** this means:*

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*

- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

—any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably

outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework

taken as a whole; or—specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”

The Development Plan

3.2 For the purposes of Section 38(6), the development plan comprises the Cornwall Local Plan (CLP) (adopted by Cornwall Council on 22nd November 2016).

3.3 The following policies of the CLP are relevant to the consideration of this application:-

- Policy 1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy 2 – Spatial Strategy
- Policy 3 – Role and Function of Places
- Policy 12 – Design
- Policy 13 - Development standards
- Policy 21 - Best use of land and existing buildings

- Policy 23 - Natural environment
- Policy 26 – Flood risk management
- Policy 27 - Transport and accessibility
- Policy 28 - Infrastructure

Other Material Considerations

- 3.4 Particular attention is again drawn to the NPPF, which sets out the government's up-to-date planning policy.
- 3.5 Paragraph 6 advises that "*The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.*"
- 3.6 Paragraph 7 sets out that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.
- 3.7 Attention is also drawn to the 'Core Planning Principles' set out at paragraph 17, together with Section 6 (delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes), 7 (requiring good design) and 11 (conserving and enhancing the natural environment).
- 3.8 The Cornwall Design Guide is also a material consideration to which due regard should be had, and will be referred to below as required.
- 3.9 It is understood that Mawgan in Pydar Parish Council has commenced the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan. However, I am not aware of any draft plan or other documentation that has yet been produced that could be attributed any weight in the consideration of this application.

4. Planning Issues

Principle

- 4.1 The replacement of existing dwellings within settlements is clearly acceptable in principle. Given that the Restormel Local Plan is no longer in force and that the development boundaries round settlements that formed a component of that plan no longer exist, judgements need to be made on a case by case basis to determine whether a site lies within a settlement or not. In this case, it is common ground with Cornwall Council's planning officers that the proposed dwelling will be situated on land within the settlement, this being clearly established in pre-application discussions last year. Indeed the Council's written response of 26th July 2017 confirms, as follows, "*it is observed through a desk top analysis and by visiting the site that the proposed replacement dwelling would be situated within the existing built form of Trenance and have residential dwellings on all boundaries,*" and "*Given that there are existing residential dwelling on the plot the principle of its replacement is acceptable and in accordance with policies within the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030.*"

Design and Landscape/Visual Impact

- 4.2 Whilst the Council's pre-application response of 26th July 2017 indicated that the site lies within an "Area of Special Character," follow-up discussions with the Council have confirmed that this is not the case; specifically that neither the "Area of Special Character" nor associated Policies 3 or R35 of the Restormel Local Plan were 'saved.'
- 4.3 Accordingly, the site does not lie within an area covered by any landscape designation. This is relevant to the consideration of the proposal's impact in the landscape mindful that the site does not lie within a 'valued landscape'; not even a locally designated landscape designation, and that the weight to be attributed to landscape impact should be commensurate with this fact having regard to paragraphs 109 and 113 of the NPPF. Moreover, land that is

designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) lies some way to the north and south of the settlement and the proposal will clearly have no impact upon the setting of land falling within this landscape designation.

- 4.4 That said, the proposal offers the opportunity to both improve the design and appearance of the dwelling on the site, and thereby its contribution to the character and appearance of the settlement and its rural/coastal setting. As noted above, the application proposes the demolition of the existing dwelling, a building of no intrinsic value that represents a form of dwelling (a dormer bungalow) that is not 'Cornish' and, in terms of its design quality, has nothing in particular to commend it, with a replacement dwelling of high quality, contemporary and sustainable design/construction.
- 4.5 With regard to its siting, it is noted that the existing dwelling is orientated towards the eastern side of its plot whereas, as discussed, the intention is that the replacement dwelling be sited towards the west of the plot, in order to capitalise upon beach/sea views gained from the west of the plot. In terms of its landscape/visual impact, it will be clear from observing the site from various vantage points that the simple act of re-siting the dwelling will not in itself change the impact of the dwelling at all. As discussed above, and confirmed by the planning officer at pre-application stage, in long range views (e.g. in the vicinity of the Merrymoor Inn to the south of the site or from the coast path to the south-west), the plot is surrounded by other dwellings and the relative siting of the dwelling is somewhat academic; the visual/landscape impact of the dwelling being the same irrespective of its siting within the plot. (Though by re-siting the dwelling to the west, the green space between the proposed dwelling and its neighbour to the east, Headlands, will be increased).
- 4.6 However, comparing the landscape/visual impact of the existing dwelling against of the proposed dwelling, it is pertinent to note that whereas the existing dwelling is finished in white render, which clearly draws attention to the

property, the proposed dwelling will feature a living 'green' roof and will be externally finished with natural stone, timber and copper. The darker 'stealth' colours of these materials combined with a low-slung, ground-hugging form of the dwelling that works with the site's topography and sensitive new landscaping will offer a building that metaphorically recedes into the hillside and has less presence and impact than the existing dwelling. (Even the proposed parking spaces, using "grasscrete", have been conceived to reduce the landscape/visual impact of the resulting dwelling). Glazing is discrete, more so given the inclusion of external louvers.

- 4.7 There are several examples of other dwellings in the settlement that have successfully used contemporary form and materials to reduce their landscape/visual impact, and attention is drawn to a property known as Sand Dunes (also designed by ARCO2 Architects) which lies just to the south of the Scarlet Hotel and offers a useful precedent/comparison in respect of the current application.
- 4.8 In terms of policy, Policy 2 of the Local Plan requires at criterion 1.(a.) that *"...the design of development is high quality and demonstrates a cultural, physical and aesthetic understanding of its location..."* and at criterion 1.(b) that consideration is given to *"the impact of development upon the ... beauty and diversity of landscape and seascape, character and setting of settlements..."* Policy 12 goes on to state that *"Development should demonstrate a design process that has clearly considered the existing context, and how the development contributes to the social, economic and environmental elements of sustainability through fundamental design principles."* Criteria then go on to require a demonstration of principles, inter alia, *"a. character – creating places with their own identity and promoting local distinctiveness while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Being of an appropriate scale, density, layout, height and mass with a clear understanding and response to its landscape, seascape and townscape setting,"* and, *"b. layout – provide*

continuity with the existing built form and respect and work with the natural and historic environment; high quality safe private and public spaces; and improve perceptions of safety by overlooking of public space...

- 4.9 For the reasons discussed, I consider that the proposals clearly demonstrate compliance with these key elements of both Policies 2 and 12 of the Local Plan. Policy 23 (Natural Environment) is also relevant to the consideration of this proposal. However, prima facie, it does not necessitate consideration of matters that are not already covered by Policies 2 and 12, and I consider the proposal fully compliant with it for the same reasons.
- 4.9 Turning to the NPPF, attention is drawn to paragraphs 17, 58, 60 and 64.
- 4.10 With regard to the Core Planning Principles set out at paragraph 17, it is submitted that the proposal offers a good quality of design, consistent with the requirement of this paragraph.
- 4.11 With regard to paragraph 58, it is submitted that the proposed design will *“function well and add to the overall quality of the area,”* will help *“establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit”*, will *“respond to local character... and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation,”* and will be *“visually attractive as a result of good architecture...”* and is thus wholly consistent with this paragraph.
- 4.12 Paragraph 60 advises that *“Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.”* It is submitted that this is precisely

the line the proposal treads, offering an innovative form and design of building but including natural stone, etc., as a means of reinforcing local distinctiveness.

4.13 Paragraph 64 sets out that “*Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.*” In this case, the proposed replacement dwelling is patently an example of good design, either considered in isolation or in relation to the fact that it will replace an existing building of no discernible merit; and, thereby, will patently take the opportunity offered to improve the character and quality of the area, as the paragraph requires.

4.14 To sum up then, it is concluded that the proposals depict a design of dwelling that, in all respects, complies with the key elements of national and local policy highlighted.

Impact Upon the Amenities of Residents

4.15 One of the Core Planning Principles set out at paragraph 17 of the NPPF is that planning should “*always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.*” Policies 12 and 13 of the Cornwall Local Plan are again relevant to this consideration in terms of design and development standards. The Cornwall Design Guide is also relevant.

4.16 Given local topography and landscaping, together with the orientation of Beach View, the existing dwelling is neither overlooked nor overlooks its neighbours. The proposed dwelling, including re-siting it further to the west, will not alter the relationship of the dwelling to its neighbours in these respects. The proposals will comply with the requirements of the Cornwall Design Guide at 4.11 and, in addition, Policy 12 of the Local Plan, which seems to ensure that development proposals “*protect individuals and property from: a. overlooking and*

unreasonable loss of privacy; and b. overshadowing and overbearing impacts; and c. unreasonable noise and disturbance...”

- 4.17 Again, to sum up it is concluded that the proposals depict a design of dwelling that, in all respects, complies with the key elements of national and local policy highlighted.

Impact Upon Heritage Assets

- 4.18 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF requires that, as a minimum, the Historic Environment Record (HER) be reviewed to consider the potential impact of proposals on heritage assets. In this case the application site is not within the setting of any listed building or scheduled monument and it is not considered that the proposal will impact upon heritage assets. The proposal is considered compliant with Policy 24 (Historic Environment) of the Local Plan, together with Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This application proposes the demolition and replacement of a dwelling lying within the settlement of Mawgan Porth.
- 5.2 The dwelling to be demolished is of no discernible merit and will be replaced by a dwelling of contemporary and sustainable construction and appearance that offers a step-change in design quality. Resiting the dwelling to the west of the plot will demonstrably improve the quality of amenity it offers to its occupiers by providing sea/coastal views, without resulting in any harm to either the amenities of neighbours or to the local landscape. In long-range views, the entire plot lies within the settlement and is surrounded by existing dwellings. It is academic in terms of landscape impact whether the dwelling is located to the east, west or centre of the plot. Moreover, as noted, the design of dwelling and

use of timber, etc., as a facing material will result in a dwelling that is discreet and recessive in the landscape, unlike the white rendered building it will replace. Accordingly, it is submitted that the proposed dwelling will have less impact in the landscape than the existing dwelling.

- 5.3 The proposal complies with the relevant policies of the development plan. It is trusted that Cornwall Council will conclude likewise and, mindful of Section 38(6) and paragraph 14 of the NPPF, will approve this application.

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April 2018