

**PLANNING POLICY AND HERITAGE ASSESSMENT,
PROPOSED CONVERSION AND MODIFICATION OF A REDUNDANT RURAL
WORKSHOP TO FORM A 3 BED DWELLINGHOUSE
BUILDING NORTH OF TRETWEY FARMHOUSE
ST ERVAL,
WADEBRIDGE,
CORNWALL**



MR DUNCAN LAMB

APRIL 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 Influence Planning are instructed to submit a planning application and produce a planning policy assessment on behalf of Mr Duncan Lamb, hereafter referred to as “The Applicant”. The Architectural Drawings have been produced by Peter Scott Architectural Services.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal seeks to modify and convert the large two storey building into a residential dwelling on land north of Trethewey Farmhouse, St Erval, Cornwall.

2.2 Access would be gained from the existing access point into the site.



Image 1: Site Location Plan – Source Peter Scott Architectural Services.

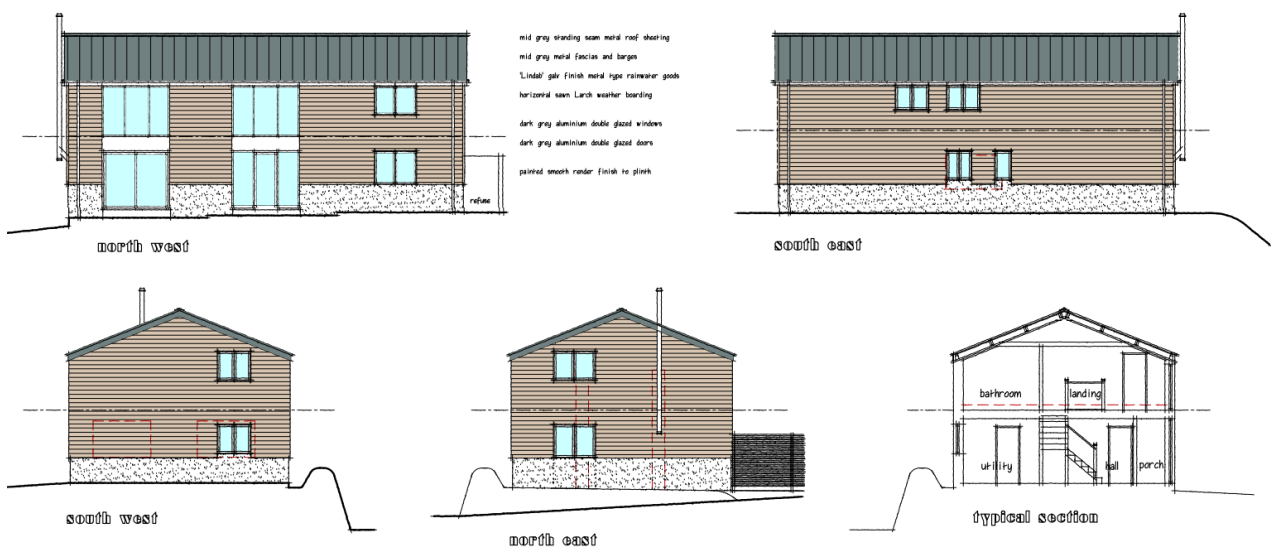
2.3 The application site is located north of Trethewey Farmhouse (Grade II Listed), which is owned by the Applicant’s mother. The existing barn appears to have been used historically for agricultural purposes, a mechanics workshop and storage area and as an agricultural workshop (tractor repairs, etc). The barn is two storey, substantial in size and is currently clad in metal corrugated sheeting

on walls and the roof. Other external walls are constructed out of solid blockwork giving a solidity to the barn.

2.4 Given the proximity of Trethewey Farmhouse to the south it is intention to undertake the conversion in a manner that not only enhances the appearance of the barn itself but also the setting of the Listed Farmhouse.



Photo of Trethewey Farmhouse located opposite the barn on other side of access in picture.



Proposed external finishes

- 2.5 The proposed conversion will enable the barn to be reclad in timber, which over time will weather and silver up. This will mask the existing block work walls and exposed metal sheeting and lead to a considerable enhancement of the site and at the same time delivering a new home for the applicant in close proximity to his mother in the farm house.
- 2.6 Two parking spaces will be located and allocated to serve the dwelling directly off the existing access, close by and to the south of the barn.

3 The National Planning Policy Framework:

- 3.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) setting out the Government's current planning policy advice was published and came into effect in July 2021.
- 3.2 Paragraph 8 of the Framework sets out the three objectives of sustainable development; being economic, social and environmental. The following paragraph explains that each are interdependent. It adds that to achieve sustainable development economic, social and environmental gains should be considered jointly and simultaneously in the planning system, which should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.
- 3.3 Paragraph 9 states that planning decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities for each area.
- 3.4 Paragraph 10 confirms that at the heart of the Framework is the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. At paragraph 11 it states that the decisionmaker should grant planning permission for development unless the impacts of doing so significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Decision takers should 'approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay'.
- 3.5 Section 5 'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes'.
Paragraph 60 advises 'To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed....and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.'
- 3.6 Paragraph 69 encourages the development of small and medium sized sites as they can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement for an area and can be built out quickly. LPAs are advised to '*support the*

development of windfall sites through policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes’.

3.7 Paragraph 80. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

(c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting. This is a redundant barn being put back into a viable residential use and will not only enhance the appearance of the building itself but also the setting of the Grade II Listed Farmhouse.

3.8 Achieving Appropriate Densities - Paragraph 124 states planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land taking account of viability, the areas character and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

3.9 Section 12. Achieving well-designed places.

The main changes to the latest version of the NPPF are contained in this section, the Government are keen to promote ‘high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places’, that add to the overall quality of the area. The proposed conversion of the barn, will provide a dwelling at a time of an acknowledged housing crisis in Cornwall with the the proposed external finishes all being materials that will achieve this new Government design objective and enhancing the building in its context.

4 Cornwall Local Plan – Strategic Policies 2010-2030:

4.1 Policy 1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and set out by the policies of this Local Plan. We will work with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals will be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan and supporting Development Plan Documents (including, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be regarded as sustainable development and be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or the policies are out of date, at the time of making the decision, the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether: a) Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or b) Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be resisted.

4.2 Policy 2: Spatial Strategy.

New development should provide a sustainable approach to accommodating growth...they should maintain the dispersed development pattern of Cornwall. Given the overarching support for converting redundant rural buildings, where it provides an enhancement, the scheme is supported by the strategic level spatial strategy.

4.3 Policy 7: Housing in the Countryside.

This policy confirms that an acknowledged '*special circumstance*' for new dwellings outside towns and villages is when a dwelling is delivered through the conversion of redundant rural buildings. This is seen as a positive outcome of delivering homes utilising existing buildings and also contributing to the visual

enhancement of the immediate setting of a site. The proposal will achieve this objective.

4.4 **Policy 12: Design.**

The proposed design is effectively utilising the existing building but with new cladding and finishes to the roof and walls will deliver a well-considered conversion enhancing the area. The scheme will provide a high quality well designed three bed dwelling for the Applicant to live in.

4.5 **Policy 13: Development Standards.**

The property will have its own private parking, generous amenity areas, recycling storage and drainage meeting the requirements of Policy 13.

4.6 **Policy 21: Best use of Land and Existing Buildings.**

Encouragement will be given to sustainably located proposals that make best use of previously developed land and buildings. The former barn and workshop makes best use of this redundant barn and enhances the site in a manner that is supported by CLP Policy 21.

4.7 **Policy 23: Natural Environment.**

The application is supported by bat and barn owl survey (Spalding Associates). This has identified that part of the barn is used as a night roost by Brown long eared bats. To ensure their status is options for mitigation have been set out in the report and will be undertaken before development commences under the watch of a qualified ecologist.

4.8 **Policy 24: Heritage Assets.**

The application barn is clearly not a Listed building but does sit within the setting of the original farmhouse which is Grade II Listed. Trethewey Farmhouse Listing information dating from 1988 is as follows:

Farmhouse. Probably late C18 or early C19 with some circa mid C19 alterations. Slate rubble, right-hand west end partly rendered. Grouted scantle slate roof with red clay ridge tiles. Brick stack over right-hand gable end, and brick stack over front and back of left-hand gable have rebuilt brick shaft. Plan: Double depth plan with shallow service rooms at the back. The 2 principal front rooms are about the same size, each heated from a gable end stack. The central entrance passage leads to a staircase and dairy behind

the right-hand room and larger kitchen behind the left-hand room. Late in the C19 porches were added to the front and rear entrances of the passages.

Exterior: 2 storeys. Nearly symmetrical 3-window south front. The 3 small openings on the first floor have late C19 4-pane sashes and slate cills, the 2 larger ground floor windows have flat red brick arches and slate cills, the left-hand with original 16-pane sash, the right-hand a late C19 4-pane sash is only slightly larger than the first floor windows. The central doorway has a late C19 4-panel door and a late C19 glazed wooden gabled porch with a wooden finial. The rear elevation has late C19 sashes and casements and a central late C19 red brick porch. **Interior:** Virtually unaltered since the C19. All internal partitions are made of vertical planks and the C19 4-panel doors survive; the ceilings have exposed joists. The front left hand room has a C20 tiled chimney-piece and the right hand room has a C20 range inserted. The straight staircase in the rear stairhall has stick balusters, the lower part of the balustrade has been taken out. The panelled doors on the first floor are intact.



Trethewey Farmhouse indicated by blue triangle – application barn building to the north.

4.9 The current proposal will not impact upon the significance of Trethewey Farmhouse and on this basis causes no conflict with Policy 24 of the CLP.

4.10 **Policy 26: Flood Risk**

The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is at the lowest risk of flooding.

4.11 **Policy 27: Transport and Accessibility.**

The proposal will utilise the existing access point serving the site. The access itself has good visibility.

5.0 **Other 'material considerations':**

5.1 On December 15th 2021 Cornwall Council's Cabinet produced detailed papers 'To Secure a Home For All to Address Cornwall's Housing Crisis' (see <https://democracy.cornwall.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=95887>).

5.2 The papers set out how the Council will need to intervene to aid housing delivery across Cornwall and one such intervention is to enable development through positively dealing with planning proposals from private individuals. This policy compliant scheme will meet this object.

5.3 Cornwall Council have adopted a positive approach to conversion of redundant buildings to dwellinghouses. Recent examples of conversions Influence Planning have submitted which include elements of re-roofing or extensions include:

PA17/06018 - Proposed conversion of redundant rural building with extension over footprint of existing pole barn to form a single dwellinghouse: Agricultural Building, Little Carharrack, St Day. Approved 21st August 2017.

PA18/03260 - Conversion of redundant rural buildings to form a single dwellinghouse and construction of garage. Higher Carwynnen Farm, Camborne. Approved 21 June 2018.

PA21/00937 – Conversion of an existing barn into a 4-bed sustainable dwelling - Abovetown, Couchs Mill, Lostwithiel. Approved 14th May 2021.

PA21/09242 - Conversion of existing barn into a residential dwelling and

demolition of existing lean to extension and former livery building. Polgoda Farm Livery, Zelah, Truro, Cornwall TR4 9HA. Approved 7th December 2021.

PA21/09903 - Conversion of redundant stable building into 1 bed residential dwelling and construction of car port. Redundant Stable Building Land North Of 'The Cottage'. Little Carharrack, Redruth. Approved 10th December 2021.

5.4 Furthermore, when taking account of appeal decisions the appeal decision APP/D0840/W/19/3220335 dated 17th April 2019 at Creekside, Trevisson, Flushing, Falmouth, TR11 5TA explains how Policy 7 of the Cornwall Local Plan is out of date and far more onerous than the NPPF of February 2019 (now updated in 2021 so further out of date).

5.5 The key point from that appeal (where there was very little of a glasshouse building left to convert) that the Inspector opines that *'paragraph 79 of the NPPF allows the development of isolated homes in the countryside where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting'*. This proposal improving the existing stable building will deliver a genuine enhancement.

5.6 Another interesting appeal decision from 4th April 2022 APP/D0840/W/21/3278663 at Tregerles Farm, Mitchell made for some interesting commentary. The Inspector when commenting on the out of date CLP Policy 7 states:

6. LP Policy 7 does not specify criteria for suitability of a building and the only guidance appears to be in the supporting text. This indicates that appropriateness for conversion will depend upon a building's scale, structural soundness and ability to convert without the necessity of substantial demolition or rebuilding. The only substantive evidence suggests that the proposal is acceptable in these respects.

7. The supporting text also sets out that traditional buildings are important to local landscape character and that the conversion of large portal framed buildings will rarely be appropriate. That does not amount to an embargo on the

conversion of portal framed buildings and, as noted above, it appears possible to convert this building within the Policy's guidelines.

5.7 The current proposal being a large barn of a more modern form, however, the commentary is a useful pointer to Cornwall Council that the decision maker should not apply CLP Policy 7 rigidly. The NPPF and the wording of CLP Policy 7 does allow the conversion of all types of redundant rural buildings (not just traditional stone barns). Given the housing crisis and the enhancement to the setting of the Listed building the scheme when assessed against the development plan as a whole should be supported.

6.0 **Conclusion:**

6.1 It is considered that this conversion and modification of the redundant workshop/barn building to provide an energy efficient sustainable dwelling will enhance the appearance of both the building and the site as a whole and the setting of Trethewey Farmhouse. The proposed conversion is a positive development of the site, at a time of a housing crisis, which accords with Policies 1, 2, 7, 21 and 24 of the Cornwall Local Plan.

6.2 The proposal promotes the delivery of sustainable development through the delivery of a bespoke home through the conversion and modification of a redundant rural building.

6.3 The proposal is policy compliant and will enhance the site; on this basis the expectation is that the application will be approved without delay in accordance with Policy 1 of the Cornwall Local Plan.

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