

Planning
Cornwall Council
(By email only)

25 May 2023

Av Job Ref – A2755

Dear Sir /Madam,

**RE: Carpenters, Sunny Corner, Portloe – Planning application submission
Supporting Planning and Design Statement (including Heritage Statement)**

I write in connection with the submission of a full planning application related to Carpenters, Sunny Corner, Portloe.

The site is located at Portloe and the existing building has been vacant and become derelict. The site contains two stone buildings with slate roofs. The rest of the site is comprised on bare earth and rock, There is a tree to the east of the existing building and two trees to the west of the second existing building, which are immediately adjacent to the road that runs past the site. The site is within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty adjacent to a Conservation Area.

The planning application proposes the change of use, conversion and extension of the existing buildings to create a dwelling with associated workshop space. The proposal includes:

- Replacement of roof structure and covering,
- A glazed link between the two buildings at first floor,
- A small two storey extension to the rear,
- Two new ground floor window openings on the north facing elevation,
- One new window opening on the west facing elevation,
- New windows and doors throughout,
- A new flush rooflight in the east building,
- Solar panels on the east elevation,
- Solid wall insulation on the internal face of exterior walls,
- New internal first floor partition, internal staircase, bathroom and kitchen fittings.

The exterior materials include:

- Cut timber roof structure and natural slate roofs to existing buildings, and new extension,
- Zinc cladding to the link roof and first floor extension,

Link of Glazing in aluminium framing,
White painted timber window frames,
Timber doors.

The Development Plan contains the following policies that are relevant to the proposed development:

Policy 3: Role and function of places - Policy outlines that the development of previously developed land within and immediately adjoining a settlement will be supported if it is of an appropriate scale. Also, outlines that within the A development should conserve and enhance the landscape character and natural beauty of the area.

Policy 7 Housing in the countryside - Policy encourages the reuse of suitably constructed redundant, disused or historic buildings that are considered appropriate to retain and would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting. The building to be converted should have an existing lawful residential or non-residential use and be ten years old or greater.

Policy 12 Design - Policy sets out how development must ensure Cornwall's enduring distinctiveness and maintain and enhance its distinctive natural and historic character.

Policy 22: European Protected Sites – Policy requires mitigation to be provided in respect of residential development in response to associated recreational impacts.

Policy 23: Natural Environment– Policy requires development to sustain local distinctiveness and character and protect and where possible enhance Cornwall's natural environment and assets according to their international, national and local significance.

Policy 24: Historic Environment– Policy states that development will be permitted where it 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.

Policy C1: Climate Change principles – Policy outlines how development in Cornwall should represent sustainable development and manage our natural, historic and cultural assets wisely for future generations. The policy encourages the re-use of land and buildings

Policy G1: Green Infrastructure Design and Maintenance – Policy sets out how green infrastructure should be central to the design of schemes, ensuring permeability of the site for wildlife and people and creating a multi-functional network of spaces and uses.

The proposed development and application submission has been prepared with consideration to the above policies and is supported by an Ecological Appraisal (including Appropriate Assessment), a Heritage Statement (see appendix to this letter) and Design Statement (included within this letter).

In terms of design the proposed development and with reference to the Cornwall Design Guide, the context character of the site is defined by numerous stone buildings with slate roofs, including the application property itself. The scale and form of development is largely 2 storeys and there is a mix of detached and terraced properties within Portloe. The area to the west of the cove is characterised by a sense of enclosure within a green sided valley extending to a secluded cove. The narrow main street is enclosed by an attractive group of vernacular buildings in both exposed local stone and render under slate roofs. Characterful stone boundary walls are common both on the roadside and around gardens. The grain of development and road layout are inextricably linked to the topography of the valley and very fine views of the cove and fishing hard are afforded at the bottom of the village. To the east of the cove there is once again a sense of enclosure within a green sided valley and a tight grain to the layout of the characterful vernacular houses. Sea views are readily available towards the bottom of the valley, which opens up into the bay, with relatively wide views. The proposed development utilises materials that reflect and respond appropriately to the existing buildings and the surrounding context. A mix of natural slate roofs and zinc cladding ensure that the appearance of the development is appropriate to the historic character of the building and the rural setting. The use of aluminium framing, white painted timber window frames and timber doors is again. The site layout provides for suitable access and provides as much external amenity space as possible within the site (which is not extensive). The exact details of landscaping are to be confirmed moving forward. The development accords with relevant design policy and guidance.

With regard to green infrastructure and landscaping, the site layout incorporates the retention of existing trees on the site. There is limited scope for additional planting given the size of the site and existing ground conditions. It is proposed that full details of a landscaping and a planting scheme can be confirmed through a later condition.

The Heritage Statement outlines how that conversion to a dwelling would be the optimum viable use and the only way to secure investment in their renovation and ongoing maintenance. The overall form and character of the buildings will be preserved, and it is considered that, when assessed using the tests set out in paragraph 203 of the NPPF, the benefits of bringing this disused site back into viable use will be comprehensively outweigh any harm from loss of fabric or small changes in fenestration. The proposed additions that will facilitate the conversion will be clearly legible and subservient to the two buildings. The scheme is also found to be beneficial to the setting of the Portloe Conservation Area.

The Ecological Appraisal (including Appropriate Assessment) has established that there will be no unacceptable impacts on ecology/protected species and proposes the installation of bird and bat boxes.

In conclusion, the proposed development is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the development and material considerations. We therefore hope that that a positive decision can be issued at the earliest opportunity and we look forward to working with you during the determination of the application to reach that conclusion.

Should you have any queries regarding the request please contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Richard Bailey MRTPI PIEMA
Associate Director

Appendix – Heritage Statement

APPENDIX - HERITAGE STATEMENT

Introduction

In accordance with the requirement at paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) this statement describes the significance of the heritage assets affected by the proposals and provides an assessment of their impacts on that significance. The assessment methodology is in accordance with Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008), the Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) and Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance.

Carpenters is located at the western edge of the village of Portloe and is part of a group of properties in an area known as 'Sunny Corner.' It lies adjacent to, but not in, the Portloe Conservation Area. The Site includes two stone-built buildings positioned in a rock cut terrace to the south of the main road through Portloe. Both existing buildings have elevations on the street frontage with no pavement.

Neither building is designated or recorded on the Cornwall Historic Environment Record, however, they do appear on historic mapping from the 1840s onwards and being of historic character are likely to be considered non-designated heritage assets.

Statutory and Planning Policy Considerations

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Authority '*with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area*' to pay special attention to the '*desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'.

This requirement is maintained at section 16 of the NPPF which addresses conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Conservation Areas are defined as 'designated heritage assets' (NPPF glossary), and paragraph 199 requires that great weight be given to their conservation. Proposals that preserve elements of setting that make a positive contribution to an asset or better reveal its significance should be treated favourably (paragraph 206) and loss of elements which contribute positively should be treated as harmful.

In addition, paragraph 203 sets out the approach to non-designated heritage assets including those of archaeological interest. It states that in weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Relevant local planning policy is contained in saved policies of the Cornwall Council Local Plan 2010 – 2030 (Adopted November 2016).

Policy 24: Historic Environment

This policy contains the following relevant provisions:

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.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- sustain designated heritage assets;
- take opportunities to better reveal their significance;
- maintain the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas, especially those positive elements in any Conservation Area Appraisal;
- conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the design, character, appearance and historic significance of historic parks and gardens;
- conserve and, where appropriate, enhance other historic landscapes and townscapes, including registered battlefields, including the industrial mining heritage;
- protect the historic maritime environment, including the significant ports, harbours and quays.

Any harm to the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset must be justified. Proposals causing harm will be weighed against the substantial public, not private, benefits of the proposal.

Development and Current Condition of The Site

The Site lies on the edge of Portloe which developed as a fishing settlement in the 17th and 18th centuries, thriving on the abundance of pilchards, but the remote cove was also an ideal location for smuggling. The earliest available mapping of the village is the Tithe Map of 1840 (see below). This illustrates The Site and the small enclave of Sunny Corner as separated from the main village which depicts densely packed dwellings covering the lower slopes of the valley extending into the cove.



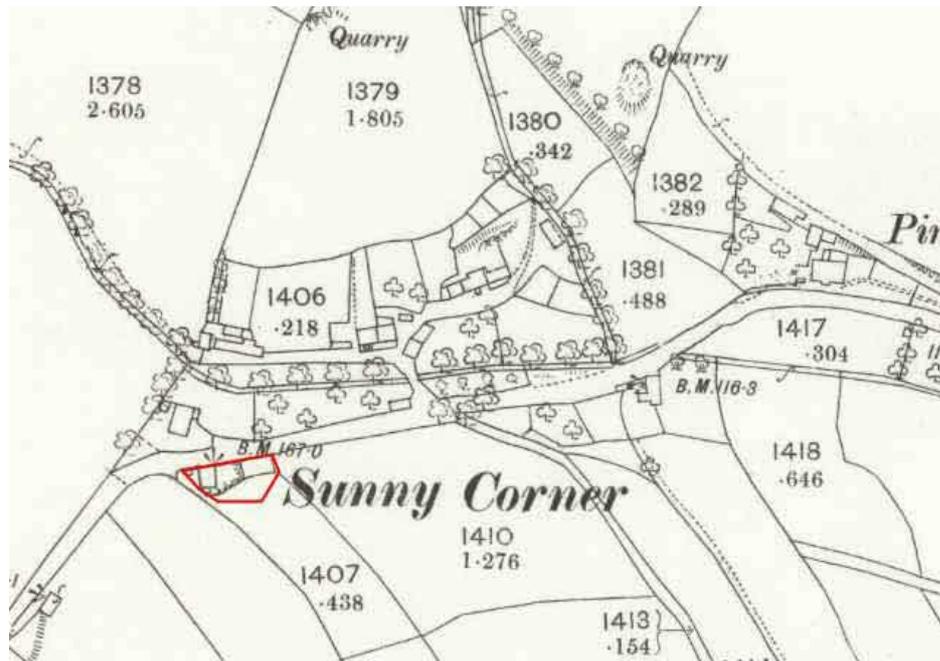
Tithe Map 1840 (site in red)

The Site is shown as an established plot in 1840 with at least one extant building which is certainly one or other of the existing buildings. Tithe apportionments that accompany the map describe the plot (Plot 1753) as 'Barn and Mewhay' suggesting that both existing buildings may have occupied the plot at this time (despite the appearance of the map).



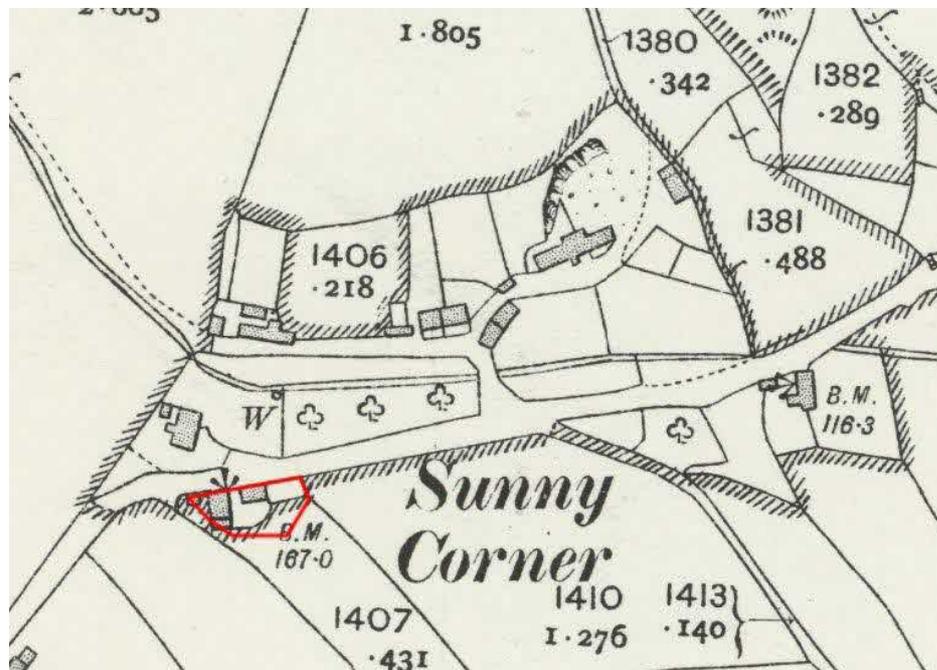
Tithe Map 1840 (close on site)

The First Edition OS map of 1880 shows the eastern most building quite clearly, and the rock cut nature of the plot is shown by the use of a map convention for exposed rock. It is possible that this was a small quarry, although not labelled as such.



25 Inch OS 1st Edition Map 1880

By 1904 the site appears on the second edition OS map as definitely containing the two existing buildings for the first time. There is also a third small structure in the west corner.



25 Inch OS 2nd Edition

In the present day there has been a considerable level of additional infilling development in Sunny Corner and some encroachment onto the land to the south of the road (adjacent to the east of The Site) and on the land to the east of Sunny

Corner. On the whole the village of Portloe has expanded very little from its historical core.

In recent years the buildings have fallen into disrepair. The sales particulars show the Site quite overgrown with the two buildings in a dilapidated condition. Door and windows are either missing or in a poor condition, and the roofs are partially collapsed. The west facing gable end of the east building displays a substantial structural crack.



The two non-designated buildings are built in random coursed local stone under natural slate roofs. The eastern example has a wide cart entrance on its west facing gable end and a loading door above. The cart entrance is supported by a substantial timber lintel and has been partially narrowed by some blockwork infill. The loading door appears to have a concrete lintel and a simple plank door. There is little of any internal character to these buildings.

Within the past year urgent remedial works to the roofs and cracked masonry walls have been undertaken and the site has been cleared of vegetation.

Works to the walls have included the rebuilding of a corner section of the wall that had come down in this initial phase of emergency repair work and installation of a new first floor level with ties to the external walls. New roof structures are traditionally made cut timber roofs comprised of purlins on king post trusses.



New traditional timber truss and purlin roof

The Character of the Portloe Conservation Area

The Portloe Conservation Area encompasses the entire village of Portloe, extending to the east and west of the cove and including a swathe of the coastal slopes to the southwest that are characterised as medieval fields. However, it excludes most of the area of Sunny Corner including The Site.

The area to the west of the cove is characterised by a sense of enclosure within a green sided valley extending to a secluded cove. The narrow main street is enclosed by an attractive group of vernacular buildings in both exposed local stone and render under slate roofs. Characterful stone boundary walls are common both on the roadside and around gardens.

The grain of development and road layout are inextricably linked to the topography of the valley and very fine views of the cove and fishing hard are afforded at the bottom of the village.

To the east of the cove there is once again a sense of enclosure within a green sided valley and a tight grain to the layout of the characterful vernacular houses. Sea views are readily available towards the bottom of the valley, which opens up into the bay, with relatively wide views.

The setting of the Conservation Area is principally its coastal location including Portloe Cove and the surrounding coastal slopes and cliffs, but also includes farmland to the north.

The site and the majority of Sunny Corner are part of the setting of the Area. They extend the attractive vernacular character of the village core and are considered to be a positive aspect of the setting.

Statement of Significance

Introduction

The NPPF glossary defines significance as “the value of a heritage asset for future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.” The setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced.

Historic England’s Conservation Principles (2008), which pre-dated the NPPF, provides a slightly different set of heritage values:

Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present - it tends to be illustrative or associative

Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place

Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

In accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF there is one designated heritage asset with potential to be affected by the proposals through development within its setting: The Portloe Conservation Area.

There will also be direct effects to the two buildings occupying the site which are considered to be non-designated heritage assets.

Significance of the Portloe Conservation Area

The Portloe Conservation Area is of significance for its architectural interest as a well-preserved group of largely vernacular houses and buildings, dating from the 17th century onwards, closely linked to its landscape and coastal topography. The morphology of the historic village remains clearly legible, and the buildings are full of local character.

There is also a degree of historical interest in the Conservation Area for the connection to the important pilchard fishing industry and the equally consequential smuggling trade.

The historic buildings and potentially also the medieval fields hold a degree of evidential value in their physical fabric.

The setting of the Conservation Area makes a substantial contribution to its significance. The coastal location being key to the character and morphology of the village core. Sunny Corner and The Site are of lesser importance to the setting, however they are positive elements which add to the rural character of the setting to the north of the village.

Significance of the Non-Designated Buildings

The two buildings are principally of architectural value as a simple form of agricultural building, built in the local vernacular style using local stone. One is early 19th century or possibly late 18th century and the other is possibly early 20th century according to map evidence.

There is a degree of evidential value in the physical fabric of the buildings.

The setting is that the edge of an isolated coastal village edge at the point of transition from residential Sunny Corner to the surrounding rural hinterland of the village. The setting makes a strong positive contribution to the significance of the buildings.

Impact Assessment

The Proposals

The proposal seeks to make variations to the existing planning permission conversion of the two buildings to a single dwelling and workshop.

The proposal includes:

- Replacement of roof structure and covering,
- A glazed link between the two buildings at first floor,
- A small two storey extension to the rear,
- Two new ground floor window openings on the north facing elevation,
- One new window opening on the west facing elevation,
- New windows and doors throughout,
- A new flush rooflight in the east building,
- Solar panels on the east elevation,
- Solid wall insulation on the internal face of exterior walls,
- New internal first floor partition, internal staircase, bathroom and kitchen fittings.

Exterior materials will include:

- Cut timber roof structure and natural slate roofs to existing buildings, and new extension,
- Zinc cladding to the link roof and first floor extension,
- Link of Glazing in aluminium framing,

White painted timber window frames,

Timber doors.

Predicted Impact on the Non-Designated Buildings

The proposals will result in some loss of fabric from both buildings including the roof structure and covering; sections of stone wall to create three new window openings and to access the glazed link; and existing timber in doors and windows.

The replacement of the roofs is considered to have been necessary and justified due to the unserviceable condition of the existing structures. The replacement is considered to be of an entirely appropriate form and design using traditional timber kingpost trusses and in materials that match or improve on the existing with no harm having been caused to the significance of the buildings.

The current scheme proposes joining the two buildings with a contemporary glazed link that would maintain the visual separation between the two buildings and preserve their original simple form. The proposed roof form of the link will result in a comfortable and well considered junction with the existing roofs. Whilst there will be a small impact on the building from the loss of original fabric, it is considered that the proposed link is justified by the need to unify the two buildings to create a viable dwelling.

The extension to the rear, builds on the existing single-story lean-to effectively converting the existing structure to two storeys without adding anything to the existing footprint. The proposal is subservient to the host building in height and will use zinc cladding to differentiate it from the historic building structure. Its location to the rear of the building will render it virtually undetectable in the main views from the street. It is considered that the extension will result in no harm to the significance of the buildings.

The additional window openings will result in a small loss of original fabric and will add to a more domestic appearance to the buildings. However, the replacements will be of an appropriate material and style to relate well to the historic structure. It is considered that the new openings are justified by the need to let additional light into the building and create better living conditions on the interior.

The new rooflight is a change from the historic appearance of the roof, but is unobtrusive, and justified by the need to allow light into the first floor of the building.

Solar panels on the east elevation will be an addition that, although visually interrupting the simple roof form, are a legible modern alteration that is reversible in future. It is considered to cause a negligible level of harm to the significance of the buildings.

Internal insulation, stairs and internal fittings will not remove or obscure any internal features of historic interest and are considered justified by the need to provide modern living and comfort standards. These proposals are therefore considered fully justified.

In summary there are small elements of harm from a loss of evidential value resulting from removal of original fabric. However, the scheme is of high quality in design and materials and has taken care to ensure that the two buildings preserve their original scale and form. As there is no realistic prospect of the buildings being used for their original agricultural purpose, the harm is considered justified by the need to create modern living spaces and is comprehensively outweighed by the benefit of bringing this dilapidated heritage asset back into use in a form that will ensure its ongoing maintenance.

Impact to the Portloe Conservation Area

The Site is not in the Conservation area but borders it and is part of its s

Although the setting of the Conservation area is for the most part rural and coastal, the area of Sunny Corner and The Site has an existing residential character and it is considered that in this context the conversion of these buildings to a dwelling will, in principal, not be harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area.

The conversion will preserve the original scale and form of the historic buildings and the scheme proposes the use of appropriate materials to preserve the character and quality of the setting of the Conservation Area.

The proposal will bring these disused and deteriorating buildings back into an appropriate and viable use that will halt their dilapidation and ensure their ongoing maintenance to the benefit of the setting of the Conservation Area.

It is considered that the proposals will enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and be beneficial to its significance.

Conclusion

The two buildings are of historic character and lie within the setting of Conservation Area. Having been empty and disused since the 1970s they are in a state of severe disrepair, and it is considered that conversion to a dwelling would be the optimum viable use and the only way to secure investment in their renovation and ongoing maintenance.

Emergency works to the roof structure has already been undertaken, in line with the proposed scheme for a high-quality conversion of the two buildings. The traditional timber trusses that have been installed demonstrate the intent to use high quality materials and workmanship.

The scheme proposes minor changes to the fenestration of the buildings that will result in a small loss of fabric and a more domestic appearance to the elevations. However, the overall form and character of the buildings will be preserved, and it is considered that, when assessed using the tests set out in paragraph 203 of the NPPF, the benefits of bringing this disused site back into viable use will be comprehensively outweigh any harm from loss of fabric or small changes in fenestration.

The scheme is considered to be beneficial to the setting of the Portloe Conservation Area. The currently dilapidated buildings will be restored and maintained in the long

term and their original form scale and character will be preserved. The proposed additions that will facilitate the conversion will be clearly legible and subservient to the two buildings.