



Planning Statement

**Sunnyside Farm, Cambrose,
Redruth, TR16 4HT**

Construction of replacement dwelling

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Cover photo courtesy of Google Earth, image date 07/10/2022

Summary

Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing farmhouse and the construction of a more sustainable and energy efficient replacement dwelling. The existing building has reached the end of its habitable life and the Applicants wish to construct a more sustainable, modern dwelling in its place to ensure they can continue living on the site.

The existing building requires constant repair to keep it habitable and this is no longer viable, nor does the poor construction allow for feasible alterations or extensions. The new, sustainable dwelling would be in the same location, of high-quality design that references traditional architecture, and would not be prominent in the rural landscape. There are no constraints covering the site and no neighbouring dwellings.

The proposals would comply with Policy 7 of the Cornwall Local Plan, which allows replacement dwellings in the countryside, and there is no material reason why permission should not be granted for this sustainable development. The application follows a withdrawn application for a previous design, and the new proposals have been the subject of positive pre-application advice.

Location and Description of Site

The existing dwelling is a detached two storey farmhouse of traditional form and appearance that is reflective of many such farmhouses in the area. The dwelling is of painted stone construction with gable ends that include chimneys at either end. The farmhouse is south facing with rectangular footprint, with windows contained solely on the south elevation, with two traditional openings at both ground and first floor level, positioned either side of a lean-to front porch. A single storey lean-to also adjoins the western gable end. The dwelling faces onto its curtilage, parking and a range of outbuildings to the south, but is otherwise surrounded by agricultural fields, with its solid rear elevation backing onto the land to the north.

The property appears little altered since its construction in the latter part of the 19th century, retaining its single room depth and two-up two-down room layout. It is likely that the building is substantially the same as indicated on the 1878 OS survey map of the area (published 1888) and has survived as it lies just to the east of RAF Portreath at Nancekuke (now RRH Portreath), which mapping shows required the demolition of many other rural buildings in the vicinity.

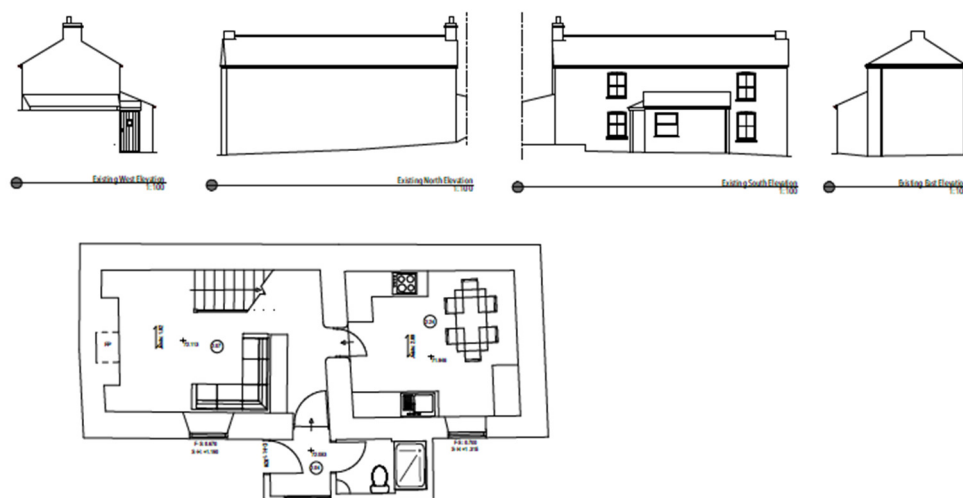


Figure 1: existing elevations and ground floor plan (not to scale)

Access is via a private track from the southwest, that turns southeast to join the road at the nearest settlement of Cambrose, approximately 0.5km to the southeast. The hillside to the south has been developed with a holiday cottage complex that is prominent in the wider setting, however Sunnyside farm is set away from roads and footpaths and does not have a strong visual presence in the landscape, despite the relatively open character of the surroundings, with the farmhouse being set lower than the adjacent outbuildings in front and lying on the side of a slight valley.

There are no landscape, ecological or heritage constraints of relevance that cover the site. Under the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study, the site is within Landscape character area 11: Redruth, Camborne and Gwennap. This character area is described as a small-scale rolling landscape running from the exposed north coast to the Fal ria in the south. Outside of the urban areas and areas disturbed by mining activity, the dominant land use is pasture. Other than this, the site and the immediate surroundings display little in common with the wider character area that is dominated by the developed urban areas and former industrial areas associated with the mining World heritage site (WHS) and the site lies away from the setting of this designated area. The site is situated within the Parish of Portreath, a designated Neighbourhood Plan area. There is no relevant planning history for the site.



Figure 2: Location of site in context of wider area and nearest settlement.

Proposed Development

The existing dwelling would be demolished and replaced by a new dwelling on a similar footprint. The proposed design would now replicate the traditional form of the original cottage, being two storeys with gable ends, finished in stone and render with rear gable projection. The new dwelling would incorporate 4 bedrooms at first floor level, while the main ground floor area would be occupied by an open plan living area. The floor level would also be lowered to further reduce the height.



Figure 3: Illustrations of proposed front and rear elevations.

Planning Policy Assessment

The Development Plan for the area consists of the Cornwall Local Plan and the Portreath Neighbourhood Development Plan. The most relevant policies of the plans are covered below.

Cornwall Local Plan

Policy 1 relates to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and sets out that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan and supporting Development Plan (including, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be regarded as sustainable development and be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposals for a replacement, energy efficient dwelling of sustainable construction, without causing harm to the landscape or any other material considerations, is sustainable development that should be approved without delay.

Policy 2 relates to spatial strategy, and states that “New development should provide a sustainable approach to accommodating growth, providing a well-balanced mix of economic, social and environmental benefits. This should maintain the dispersed development pattern of Cornwall and provide homes and jobs based on the role and function of each place”. The policy requires development to meet a number of objectives, including respecting and enhancing quality of place., with design being high quality and demonstrating an understanding of its location.

The proposals accord with the ethos of the policy and have taken account of the Planning Officer’s concerns raised during the previous application, resulting in a more traditional form to the building. The proposals would have no adverse impact on the character of the area, and are considered appropriate in scale, position and form, and utilising recessive natural materials.

Policy 7: Housing in the countryside.

This is the main policy that permits the proposed development, setting out the circumstances under which new dwellings are allowed in the open countryside.

The submitted design positions the new dwelling in the same position and on the same axis as the existing, facing southwards to maximise solar gain. Although greater in depth, the building retains a largely traditional rectangular footprint and gable ends in reference to the local farmhouse vernacular. A natural slate roof, stone and render finishes to the elevations would ensure a recessive impact on the open landscape setting.

Paragraph 2.34 of the preceding supporting text to the policy states that “Part of the defining character of the Cornish countryside is the range of traditional vernacular buildings in the landscape, although a number of these have been lost through replacement dwellings. Consideration should always be given to retaining or incorporating traditionally built and structurally sound dwellings into replacement dwellings.” In light of this, the merits of retaining the existing dwelling were originally explored, however the property requires so much ongoing work that it is no longer viable and an energy efficient, sustainably constructed dwelling, represents the most sustainable option.

The existing dwelling also retains significant permitted development rights for extensions; however, the poor state of the stone construction means that the owners are unable to extend without potentially destroying the structural integrity of the building. The existing building has

been surveyed by two structural surveyors, to consider the options and both confirmed the scope of works required and the associated costs of bringing the existing building up to standard are preventative, and demolition is the best option.

In addition to the structural assessment, despite re-plastering and painting the inside of the property at the end of 2022, the building is already experiencing significant levels of mould and mildew, with rising damp peeling off plaster. Despite roof repairs, the roof is continuing to leak and there is a lack of foundations, with rising damp, electrical issues, and ground water coming up through the kitchen floor despite previous tanking. The owners are experiencing extremely large electric bills in an effort to keep the house as warm and dry as possible and have to run two dehumidifiers for 24 hours a day. The Owners wish to stress they are no longer able to manage the black mould that is rife throughout the building. Some of these issues are highlighted in photographs below.

The Applicant's plan is for an eco-friendly, warm and dry home that they do not have to worry about falling down or catching fire.

In light of the above, it is clear that replacing the dwelling is now the most sustainable option in this case and following the assessment of the previous application and subsequent pre-application advice, it is clear that the Planning Authority now support the replacement of the dwelling. It is also noted that Portreath Parsih Council were in support of the previous application.



*Figures 4 and 5: showing peeling and water ingress that has occurred within a month since re decorating.
Figure 6: showing inside kitchen cupboards as example of the black mould throughout the building.*

Policy 12 sets out the Council’s design commitments for high quality, safe, and sustainable design. Developments should have regard to local distinctiveness and consider the existing context having regard to matters such as character and layout.

The policy is clear that appropriate innovation should also not be prevented or discouraged. It is therefore relevant that the submitted proposals do show regard to local distinctiveness and landscape, using traditional materials and referencing the form and layout of the existing house, yet show suitable modern design elements that enable the dwelling to be more sustainable.

Policy 13 is concerned with development standards and requires new development to achieve sufficient standards for aspects such as internal space, external space, parking, and natural light and ventilation.

The existing dwelling is no longer suitable for modern living and the proposals would ensure compliance with the policy.

Policy 23 relates to the natural environment and sets out that development proposals will need 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.

The site is not within any landscape designations, however, the design and siting mean the proposed dwelling will sit low in the landscape and appear recessive, as a suitable replacement to the existing structure. It is also relevant that the site is not apparent from any nearby roads or footpaths.

Policy 24: Historic Environment. A desk top appraisal has been undertaken as required by the policy. The site is not near to any listed designated or non-designated heritage assets and although a good example of the local vernacular of farmhouses in the landscape, the building is not unusual and is not considered to be an asset in itself.

[Portreath Neighbourhood Development Plan](#)

Policy 4 of the NDP relates to Design standards and requires developments to be sited and designed to recognise the distinct character of the Parish.

Policy 8: Provision of energy efficient buildings and places.

The policy offers direct support for the proposals as it requires “The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction, be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions, with building siting and orientation that maximises passive solar gain”, and encouraging “The use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials and Installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing”.

The south facing orientation of the dwelling and its construction will adhere to the policy requirements.

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It sets out the three roles of planning to achieve sustainable development, the economic, social and environmental objectives (para. 8). So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the framework (para.10). Paragraph 11 confirms that for decision taking this means developments that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, and this should be the case with this application.

The main section of relevance is section 12, Achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 30 confirms that, amongst other things, decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

It is clear that the proposals accord with the advice, showing suitable regard to the setting yet allowing for a suitable bespoke design.

Green Infrastructure Statement

The proposals relate to an existing dwelling, which will be replaced by a new, energy efficient building, improving the long-term sustainability of the occupation of the site. The potential for bats and nesting birds has been considered and due care to the presence of bats will be taken throughout the course of demolition. The area around the house currently has little ecological value in terms of any boundaries and vegetation, and the proposals present an opportunity to enhance the ecological potential of the site through boundaries, planting and the provision of features in construction such as bat and bird boxes. No trees or hedges will be removed.

Conclusion

The application relates to the replacement of an existing dwelling in the countryside and is necessary to ensure the Applicants can continue to live of the site in the long term, as the existing dwelling is becoming unsuitable for habitation without constant repair and expenditure that is not sustainable. The poor quality of the existing structure is such that options to alter and extend the accommodation are also unviable.

The proposed replacement dwelling on the same footprint as the existing dwelling, would not increase prominence in the landscape and would use natural and recessive materials, demonstrating appropriate regard to the rural setting, while achieving a high quality, sustainably constructed and energy efficient dwelling of traditional form.

The proposals have the direct support of policy 7 of the Cornwall Local Plan and have been designed to address the concerns of the Local Authority, that arose from the previous application. Positive pre-application feedback has subsequently been received in respect of the submitted design and no conflict has been identified with the relevant Development plan policies for the area, and as such permission should be granted without delay.