



planning | architecture | landscape

laurence associates

Helford House, May Court
Threemilestone Business Park
Truro, Cornwall, TR4 9LD
t: +44 (0) 1872 225 259

e: hello@laurenceassociates.co.uk
w: www.laurenceassociates.co.uk

PLANNING STATEMENT

STAGE 1 – PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

TRENEAGUE MILL, TRENEAGUE, ST. STEPHEN

ON BEHALF OF BROAD DEVELOPMENTS

Our ref: 23158

SEPTEMBER 2023

CONTENTS:

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY..... 2

2. LOCATION OF THE SITE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SURROUNDING AREA 3

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY 5

4. PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE..... 5

4.2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT 5

4.3 STAGES 6

4.4 REQUIREMENTS FOR A VALID STAGE 1 PERMISSION..... 6

4.5 STAGE 1 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS 7

4.6 STAGE 1 IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD 7

5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT..... 8

6. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT 9

THE CORNWALL LOCAL PLAN (2016) 9

6.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2021) 10

6.3 CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER’S ADVICE NOTE ON INFILL/ROUNDING OFF – DECEMBER 2017..... 13

6.4 THE CORNWALL DESIGN GUIDE 2021 13

7. PLANNING ASSESSMENT 14

7.1 PRINCIPLE OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT 14

7.2 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS 17

8. CONCLUSION 18

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 Laurence Associates is retained by Broad Developments ('the applicant') to progress a permission in principle for a proposed housing development ('the proposed development') at Treneague Mill, Treneague, St. Stephen ('the site').
- 1.1.2 This statement, alongside a review of the site history and relevant policies at both a local and national level, provides a description of the proposed development together with an appraisal of the planning merits of the scheme as a whole and should be read in conjunction with the suite of submitted drawings.
- 1.1.3 It is concluded that the proposals are entirely consistent with relevant policies contained within the Cornwall Local Plan 2010 – 2030 (CLP 2016), the St. Stephen-in-Brannel NDP (DRAFT) 2022 the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF 2021) and supplementary guidance contained within the Cornwall Design Guide 2021.
- 1.1.4 It is demonstrated within this statement that the development should be supported by the LPA and permission ought to be granted.

2. LOCATION OF THE SITE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1.1 St. Stephen is a large settlement approximately 6.5km to the west of the large town of St. Austell. As such, it has many services and facilities on offer, such as shops, pubs and restaurants and two local schools. Specifically, the site is surrounded by residential development to the south west, south and east / north east, with highway bounding the south, after the residential dwellings.
- 2.1.2 The area surrounding the site is very residential and urban in nature, with the main A3058 road only less than 600m away, as the crow flies. Whilst the site does sit outside of the settlement boundary of St. Stephen, it is suitably located within a cluster of dwellings and does currently house existing development.
- 2.1.3 With regards to planning constraints at the site, it is located within the Sites of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zone, the Fal and Helford Special Area of Conservation and an area susceptible to ground water flooding.
- 2.1.4 Within close proximity to the site, the following amenities can be found:
- Texaco Garage
 - St. Stephen Churchtown Academy
 - Brannel School
 - Brannel Surgery
 - St. Stephen Community Centre
- 2.1.5 The site comprises several older barns, meaning that the land would be classed as previously developed. Aerials of the site are shown below in *Figure 1* and 2. *Figure 1* shows that the barns onsite have existed since at least 2001.



Figure 1: 2001 Aerial of Site



Figure 2: 2022 Aerial of Site

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1.1 A search of Cornwall Council's online planning register has been undertaken and shows the following planning history for the site:

- **C2/87/01258:** Small courtyard development of 10 semi-detached houses and garages and one detached house and garage – Withdrawn on 2nd October 1990
- **C2/88/00956:** Erection of detached house and garage together with 5 no. terraced houses and 8 car spaces – Refused on 19th October 1989

4. PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

4.1.1 Permission in Principle (PIP) is a type of planning permission targeted at residential-led developments which separates the consideration of matters of principle from the technical detail of the development.

4.1.2 On the basis that this type of consent is still relatively new, this section sets out the relevant legislative provisions and associated guidance and provides an outline of the various stages involved.

4.2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

4.2.1 The relevant legislation is set out within the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017 whilst the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) provide further information and guidance.

4.2.2 The NPPF helpfully defines Permission in Principle at Annex 2 as follows:

'A form of planning consent which establishes that a site is suitable for a specified amount of housing-led development in principle. Following a grant of permission in principle, the site must receive a grant of technical details consent before development can proceed.'

4.3 STAGES

- 4.3.1 The permission in principle consent route has two stages.
- 4.3.2 Firstly, there is Stage 1, through which an applicant can establish with the Local Planning Authority whether or not a site is suitable in-principle in land use terms.
- 4.3.3 Secondly, providing the Stage 1 application is successful, a Stage 2 application can be progressed which is also known as the 'Technical Details Consent' stage at which point the detailed development proposals are assessed in full, in a similar manner to a reserved matters application.
- 4.3.4 The process for Stage 1 varies depending on the scale of the proposed development and whether it relates to greenfield or previously developed land. For minor developments i.e. developments of less than ten units, an application must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and this applies whether the site is greenfield or previously developed.

4.4 REQUIREMENTS FOR A VALID STAGE 1 PERMISSION

- 4.4.1 Article 5D of the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017 sets out the requirements for a valid Stage 1 application.
- 4.4.2 The requirements include the following:
- Completed application form;
 - A plan to which identifies the land to which the application relates;
 - The correct application fee.
- 4.4.3 On the basis the scope of the Stage 1 application is limited to location, land use and amount of development, being those issues relevant to the principle of the development, there is no requirement (either nationally or locally) for any other form of technical, supporting information: this would be provided at the Technical Details Consent stage.
- 4.4.4 Once a valid application for PIP has been received, the Local Planning Authority should make a decision on the proposal as quickly as possible, and in any event within

the statutory time limit of 5 weeks unless a longer period has been agreed in writing with the applicant.

4.5 STAGE 1 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

4.5.1 Proposals are determined in accordance with the adopted development plan for the site together with any relevant material considerations and to reiterate, the Local Planning Authority's assessment within the Stage 1 application is limited to the location, land use and amount of development only.

4.5.2 To be clear, matters such as ecology, flood risk, contamination, trees, highways and so on are only to be assessed at Stage 2, once the principle has been accepted.

4.6 STAGE 1 IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

4.6.1 Where Stage 1 permission is granted, an applicant has three years to apply for Stage 2 Technical Details Consent.

4.6.2 As per Paragraph: 020 of the NPPG (Reference ID: 58-020-20180615) Local Planning Authorities cannot add conditions or secure planning obligations to the grant of permission under Stage 1 but can inform applicants on the level of information and any likely obligations that may be required at the Technical Details Consent stage. In a similar vein, the Community Infrastructure Levy only applies following the grant of the Technical Details Consent.

5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1.1 The proposal is for a housing development to be constructed on the land in question, which would amount to development on previously developed land, under Policy 21.
- 5.1.2 No details in relation to design are provided at this stage as it is purely the principle of development that is being sought for approval.
- 5.1.3 As part of this application an indicative site plan is submitted to demonstrate how many houses could be fit on the site, totalling 6. The indicative site plan shows two detached dwellings, four semi-detached dwellings (all with two parking spaces each) and a vehicle turning area could be easily accommodated on the site. In order to accommodate the development, it would be necessary to demolish the redundant agricultural building that exists on site. The Mill building which is sited immediately west of the site would be retained as part of this proposal.
- 5.1.4 Any final scheme would seek to ensure the proposed development would be of a scale and design that would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area, incorporating good sized garden areas, and parking provision.

6. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise; meaning amongst other things any other supplementary / supporting planning documents and the government's guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021).

6.1.2 The statutory development plan for the site consists of the Cornwall Local Plan 2010 – 2030 (CLP) (2016), whilst material considerations in this instance comprise national policies set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), and the Cornwall Design Guide 2021

THE CORNWALL LOCAL PLAN (2016)

6.1.3 **Policy 1** sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that, when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development as enshrined within the NPPF.

6.1.4 **Policies 2 and 2a** 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. Policy 2a sets a target for a minimum of 52,500 homes over the plan period.

6.1.5 **Policy 3** states that housing outside of the main towns identified in the policy, as is relevant to this application, will be delivered for the remainder of the Community Network Area housing requirement through:

- Identification of sites where required through Neighbourhood Plans;
- rounding off of settlements and development of previously developed land within or immediately adjoining that settlement of a scale appropriate to its size and role;
- infill schemes that fill a small gap in an otherwise continuous built frontage and do not physically extend the settlement into the open countryside. Proposals

should consider the significance or importance that large gaps can make to the setting of settlements and ensure that this would not be diminished;

- rural exception sites under Policy 9

6.1.6 **Policy 12** relates to ensuring high quality design which maintains and enhances Cornwall's distinctive natural and historic character, whilst **Policy 13** relates to development standards.

6.1.7 **Policy 21** relates to the best use of land and existing buildings, and supports the reuse of sustainably located land and buildings.

6.1.8 **Policy 27** relates to transport and accessibility. It states that developments should provide safe and suitable access to the site for all people and not cause a significantly adverse impact on the local or strategic road network that cannot be managed or mitigated.

6.2 ST. STEPHEN-IN-BRANNEL NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (DRAFT)

6.2.1 The St. Stephen in Brannel NDP has not yet been adopted/ratified by Cornwall Council and therefore currently holds a limited weight as a material condition in the planning balance.

6.2.2 **Policy H1 – Housing Mix:** New residential developments of 10 or more units will be supported in accordance with Policy 6 of the CLP if they provide a mix of formats, sizes and tenures of dwellings to ensure a range of housing choice is available to meeting housing needs in the Parish.

6.2.3 **Policy H2 – Development Boundaries:** Outside the Development Boundaries, development will not be supported unless it is in accordance with CLP Policy 7, 9, or 21 or is small scale infill within established hamlets and small groups of dwellings that complies with NDP Policy H6.

6.2.4 **Policy D5 – Reconstruction or Conversion of Abandoned/Neglected Buildings:** The reconstruction or conversion of existing derelict, disused, abandoned and dilapidated buildings which were originally permanent structures and of substantial

construction will be supported where they create permanent residential accommodation.

6.3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2023)

- 6.3.1 The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of this application as per Paragraph 2 of the Framework and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It sets out Government planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 6.3.2 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 6.3.3 The golden thread running throughout the NPPF is the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11) whereby developments which correctly balance the requirements of economic, social and environmental issues should be granted planning permission unless there are strong reasons that permission should not be granted.
- 6.3.4 Paragraph 38 states that LPAs should approach decisions on proposals in a positive and creative way and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
- 6.3.5 Chapter 5 of the NPPF relates to the delivering a sufficient supply of homes. Paragraph 60 states that 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, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 6.3.6 Paragraph 119 states that decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

- 6.3.7 Paragraph 120 makes it clear that planning policies and decisions should:
- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
 - b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;
 - c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
 - d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure); and
 - e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers.
- 6.3.8 Paragraph 126 places a strong emphasis on achieving high quality designs in new developments and states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 127 further provides several design related criteria that is to be achieved during the decision-making process.

6.4 CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER'S ADVICE NOTE ON INFILL/ROUNDING OFF – DECEMBER 2017

6.4.1 The Chief Planning Officer's 'Advice Note: Infill and Rounding Off' was published in December 2017 to provide clarity on Policy 3 in the decision taking process and is a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

6.4.2 In terms of establishing if the site lies within or adjacent to a settlement, the advice note explains what, in the opinion of Cornwall Council, constitutes a settlement:

"A settlement is a place where people collectively live in permanent buildings. Other than at the named towns there is no absolute definition, but the smaller villages and hamlets should have a 'form and shape and clearly definable boundaries, not just a low density straggle of development' (paragraph 1.68 LP:SP). Some linear settlements can meet the test of a clear form and shape suitable for infill and on occasion rounding off. Well-defined groups of dwellings with a collective name will normally be settlements".

6.4.3 The guidance explains what the Council consider to be 'infill' in the context of Policy 3:

'This is development that would fill a gap in an otherwise continuous frontage which will normally be a road frontage. The layout and density of the development should be in character with and similar to others in the continuous frontage. Development should not diminish a large gap that is considered important to the setting of the settlement. Paragraph 1.67 notes that the large gaps between the urban edge of a settlement and other isolated dwellings are not appropriate locations for infill development. This applies to settlements of all sizes.'

6.5 THE CORNWALL DESIGN GUIDE 2021

6.5.1 The new Cornwall Design Guide was adopted in December 2021. The guide supports the Cornwall Local Plan by providing a comprehensive guide to help inspire and guide the delivery of high-quality places to live.

7. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

7.1 PRINCIPLE OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

7.1.1 The proposal is for a new housing development to be constructed and would constitute development of previously developed land (in line with Policy 21). The proposal is located within a residential setting on the periphery of the main centre of St. Stephen. As such, the site is very sustainable to deliver housing.

7.1.2 With regards to Policy 21, the proposal increases building density at an appropriate location, taking into the account access to services and facilities to ensure efficient use of land. St. Stephen, located 230m from the site, is densely populated and does not fall within any landscape constraints or designations. The site is in a sustainable and accessible location within safe walking/driving distance to services and facilities, such as schools, community facilities and shops. For example, St. Stephen academy is only a 10-minute walk away and the Texaco garage is only a 15 minute walk. Public transport is also widely available in the area as well. The nearest bus stop is at Glen Vue, approximately a 10 minute walk from the site, as per Google Maps. In addition to this, as the land is evidently previously developed land (as can be seen in *Figures 1 and 2*), the proposal is increasingly sustainable when compared to an undeveloped plot of land within a residential area. As such, the proposal is considered appropriate to increase building density at this site.

7.1.3 As can be seen from *Figure 3*, below, the site is bounded by residential development on three sides and as such residential accommodation within this location is not incongruent with the surroundings of the area.



Figure 3: Aerial of Context of Site and Surrounding Area



Figure 4: Wider Context of Site

- 7.1.4 As such, the proposal is also compliant with Policy H2 of the draft NDP as although the site sits outside of the defined settlement boundary it is residential development in line with Policy 21 of the Local Plan which Policy H2 accepts. Furthermore, Policy D5 allows for the reconstruction and redevelopment of disused and derelict buildings. Although this proposal would not make use of the derelict buildings onsite, it will facilitate the redevelopment of the site and removing the derelict buildings to provide housing in this area.
- 7.1.5 At this stage, the applicant is applying for permission in principle which only requires the submission of a red line boundary. No design details are necessary. The focus therefore is on whether the principle of building housing here is acceptable.
- 7.1.6 Due to the size of the plot, future development would ensure adequate parking and good-sized gardens for the proposed dwellings. The dwellings would be located in a position which allows high levels of privacy for existing and future residents.
- 7.1.7 As per Section 5 of the NPPF, all local authorities have an obligation to deliver sufficient housing to meet the needs of their residents. This is reiterated in Policy 2a of the CLP which sets a requirement for the delivery of at least 52,500 dwellings over the plan period. This figure is a minimum target and housing applications which accord with the Development Plan should not be refused simply because the Council may have met this figure.

- 7.1.8 The NPPF provides specific support for small to medium sized sites with Paragraph 69 detailing that 10% of a Council's housing requirement should be delivered on sites no larger than 1 hectare. The application at hand would aid the Council in meeting this ongoing requirement through an efficient use of an unallocated site, in line therefore with Paragraph 68.
- 7.1.9 Given the nature of the scheme, it is considered more than likely that before and during construction, the development would contribute to the local economy directly through the employment of local companies to facilitate the build. This would include planners and architects/designers as part of the Stage 2 application process, local contractors involved in the physical build and the local supply chain through the provision of materials. Once occupied, new residents would use and sustain the growth of nearby services through local spending power. It is considered that the proposed development would therefore assist in achieving the economic aims of sustainable development.
- 7.1.10 In summary, it is considered that the proposal would constitute development of previously developed land, on a site which is seen within the context of surrounding residential properties, within proximity to local services.
- 7.1.11 The application is not accompanied at this stage by the technical assessments which would allow for adherence to the environmental aims of sustainable development to be demonstrated: such matters are not relevant to the application at hand. However, we are confident that this is achievable.

7.2 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.2.1 It is important to reiterate that all design and technical related matters are not relevant considerations to this application. The nature of PIP applications infers that development could be permissible at Stage 1 but subsequently fail to gain Stage 2 consent. The submitted site layout is for illustrative purposes only.
- 7.2.2 Concerns regarding technical matters such as design, visual impact, drainage, ecology and so on should not form part of the determination of this application. It is

only when the Council have the technical information provided as part of a Stage 2 application that an informed position on such matters can be reached.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1.1 In summary, it has been demonstrated that the principle of residential development on the site is consistent with adopted local planning policies and would be consistent with the thrust of NPPF policy.
- 8.1.2 It is considered that this Permission in Principle application should be approved as the proposed redevelopment of a brownfield site, in line with Policy 21 of the CLP
- 8.1.3 The proposals would make a positive contribution to the local economy during the construction phase and would comprise new dwellings. From a social dimension point of view, the proposals would result in a high-quality contribution towards the area's housing stock; and in terms of the environmental aspect, the proposals would be developed carefully to be mitigate, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the environment.
- 8.1.4 The development should therefore be approved, having regard to the statutory determination obligation prescribed by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.