

Design and Access Statement

Prepared for

A One Planet Development

at

**New Mills
Cornwall
TR2 4NN**

on behalf of

**Mr Kieran & Dr Heidi Murphy
and their children.**

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	Page 3
2. PLANNING POLICY	Page 6
3. DESIGN	Page 9
4. ACCESS	Page 14
5. COMMUNITY	Page 15
6. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING SERVICES	Page 15
7. DEALING WITH WASTE	Page 16
8. MANAGEMENT PLAN	Page 17
9. CONCLUSION	Page 21

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.01 The Site

This statement supports a planning application which relates to partially completed residential buildings and land comprising 7½ acres to the east of Melynaweth at New Mills, Cornwall.

1.02 The Proposal

The proposal to be considered by the application is the retention and completion of the buildings for residential use, and the use of the land in association with the dwelling in a manner generally described as “off grid living” under the One Planet Development Policy. For clarity this is creating a small holding that is as far as is practically possible self-sufficient in terms of energy, water and waste, whilst also providing a significant proportion of food and income from the land. We will also explain in this statement that the land will also support the applicants’ spiritual and ethical life in forming a place of worship and a place of education for the home schooling of their children.

1.03 The Applicants

Both Mr & Dr Murphy can both be considered local residents.

Kieran was brought up in Cornwall and has only lived outside the country to go on holiday and attend university.

Heidi moved to Cornwall some twenty years ago following her qualification as a medical doctor. She has only recently given up being a GP in the county to raise her young children.

Kieran and Heidi have seven children between the ages of one and nineteen. The three youngest live with them permanently. The four oldest children are from separate marriages and live with Heidi and Kieran for a significant period of each month.

A large part of the spirit and ethos behind the proposal here is to give these children the opportunity to grow up in open countryside, learning matters of the land and self-sufficiency, whilst being free of the more insidious aspects of modern life.

Heidi and Kieran are both devout Christians and belong to a Christian community in the local area. The land at New Mills and their hopes for the land form an important part of this faith and how they wish to conduct their lives as Christians.

1.04 Background

Heidi and Kieran acquired the land at New Mills in 2021 during Covid. The land was used as a paddock and a small timber stable existed on the land. At that time they had long term plans for sustainable, off grid living for the land, but the onset of Covid very much brought their plans to the forefront.

During Covid Heidi and Kieran were unable to attend their usual church meetings. It soon became apparent that worshipping under the oak tree on the hill at New Mills and located in the centre of their land was possible especially given the constraints upon indoor meetings. This has continued since then.



Covid also led to Heidi and Kieran commencing home educating for their children. This has continued since then for their family and other local home educating families on an ongoing basis. This has proved particularly successful. Having become closely associated with the land Heidi and Kieran took the decision in 2023 to build some timber frame chalets as their future home and to move onto the land.

1.05 Brief Description of the Land

The land at New Mills rises steeply from the west to the east. The access onto the land where a parking area has been created is in the south west corner.



Currently a caravan is shown parked in this parking area. This is currently in storage here, but there are no plans to keep it permanently. The red car shown here is a visitor's vehicle.

Whilst the land is mainly grass and wild flower meadows it is suitable for market gardening in terraces whilst retaining much of the wild flower meadows.

To the north the land turns to scrub and woodland. This accounts for about five acres of this land and forms a permanent source of continually seeding timber.

2.00 PLANNING POLICY

2.01 Climate Emergency Development plan Document February 2023

This strategic planning advice document was adopted in 2023 with the intention of helping to address climate and ecological emergencies.

The document is one of a number of key actions identified in Cornwall's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). The DPD "Development Plan Document" aims to use the planning system in Cornwall to help deliver greener growth.

2.02 Policy C1 – Climate Change Principles.

This reads as follows:

Policy C1 – Climate Change Principles

Development in Cornwall should represent sustainable development and manage our natural, historic and cultural assets wisely for future generations, contributing in line with the scale and type of development to achieving the following objectives:

- 1) Make the fullest possible contribution to minimising greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the energy and waste hierarchies through ensuring resource efficiency, minimisation of waste and the prioritisation of renewable energy;*
- 2) Mitigate against and improve resilience to the effects of climate change;*
- 3) Contribute positively to the health, wellbeing and resilience of our communities and the natural world;*
- 4) Use and reuse land efficiently and minimise impact of development on soils through over compaction, pollution or reduction in the quality of soil and encourage regenerative practice to conserve the capacity of soils for sustainable production of food, water, raw materials and energy;*
- 5) Contribute positively to environmental growth, protecting irreplaceable habitats and the integrity of ecosystems, restoring natural processes and strengthening nature recovery networks, and ensuring a net gain for biodiversity.*
- 6) Maximise the ability to make trips by public transport, sustainable and active modes of transport in all developments through careful design and mix of uses that actively support walking and cycling rather than car use for day to day living;*

7) Conserve and enhance our natural and historic environment and cultural heritage according to their international, national and local significance and increase built and natural environment distinctiveness through locally distinctive, high quality and sustainable design and multi-functional green infrastructure provision;

8) Avoid or minimise light, water, air and noise pollution and improve or maintain air and water quality;

9) Protect and enhance carbon storage in our natural environment (including the marine environment); and

10) Regenerate, improve or maintain the natural functioning of coastal and river processes, avoiding areas at risk of flooding and coastal change and further reducing flood risk elsewhere wherever possible.

2.03 Policy G2. Biodiversity Net Gain

The policy seeks to achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity net gain with all development proposals. At present it only applies to major development proposals so we do not have to consider it in detail here. It should be noted however that the sustainable use of the land at New Mills will involve a considerable amount of new tree planting to achieve off grid living, along with plenty of fruit bushes, and the constant composting of materials cleared from the land and from the use of the land. In developing and managing the land in such a fashion there will be a significant net gain in terms of wildlife habitats compared to the previous use of the site as a paddock.

2.04 Policy AL1 – Regenerative, Low impact Development.

Low impact residential development as part of a regenerative use of land will be permitted where the proposal:

1) Is located adjoining, or well-related to a settlement or comprises an existing farm or the location can be justified in terms of the activity being undertaken and that travel patterns required for day to day needs can be met sustainably; and

2) Is demonstrably linked to a use of the land that will support a sustainable lifestyle for the development's occupants, be their principal residence and make a positive environmental and social contribution to Cornwall; and

3) *Can demonstrate through a carbon statement a clear zero-carbon approach to both construction and operation and demonstrate self-sufficiency in energy, waste and water; and*

4) *Can demonstrate that all activities and structures on site will have a low impact in terms of the environment and use of resources. The need for new structures and buildings on the site is minimised and suitable redundant buildings are used before constructing any new buildings; and*

5) *Is tied directly to the land on which it is located and new buildings are designed to have a low impact on the land and be removable and the land restored to an acceptable use at the end of an agreed period of time, or when the regenerative or low impact use ceases; and*

6) *Leads to the environmental and biodiversity regeneration of the site through a binding action plan and conserves and enhances the landscape character, heritage assets and heritage at risk and biodiversity of the site and surroundings; and*

7) *The proposal demonstrates a robust justification and improvement plan for the land use and sufficient land is available which can provide for the livelihood and substantially meet the needs of all residents on the site within a reasonable period of time and no more than 5 years from first occupation; and*

8) *Provides a trust or other bona fide mechanism for the management and running of the enterprise Climate Emergency Development Plan Document Page 19 and the selection of any future residents or activity; and*

9) *Demonstrates that the proposals will have no unacceptable adverse impacts upon residential amenity or other neighbouring uses.*

10) *Where the above is satisfied, permission will first be granted for a temporary period of up to six years subject to the condition that one year prior to the end of that agreed period, taken from the developments first occupation, a Monitoring Report is submitted to the Authority reporting on how the requirements of the management plan agreed by the Authority have been achieved. Following the grant of temporary permission, permanent permission will only be granted where the Authority is satisfied that the policy requirements have been and will continue to be met.*

Discussion on Policy AL1 within the DPD very much considers this the basis for One planet Developments which seeks to enable the off- grid lifestyles that the Murphy's wish to achieve at New Mills.

3.00 DESIGN

3.01 Brief Description

The dwelling created by the Murphys is made up of two single storey timber chalets. Each is yet to be finished. They are shown in our planning application drawing 22327.

The chalets are located at the base of the hill on the west boundary of the site. Here they are partly cut into the land which helps to conceal them.

The first of the chalets comprises living and kitchen accommodation in an open plan format.

The second chalet has bedroom and bathroom accommodation.

The existing stable is retained on the site as a store.

3.02 Materials and Form

These buildings have shallow mono pitched roofs that keep their bulk and impact to a minimum. The roofing material is a green pvc coated sheet metal which has a rural appearance and blends into the landscape.

Walls are vertical larch boarding, again rural in appearance.

Windows and doors are a green pvc.

The maximum height of the buildings is 3.5m. This reduces to 2.5m when the cutting into the land is taken into consideration. This is very low compared with modern dwellings.

The intention in terms of design here is to be very much non suburban. Accordingly tiled roofs or slate roofs are avoided as are bricks or rendered walls. Decorative porches are avoided as are fancy barge boards, window and door detailing. These buildings are intended to appear as simple rural buildings that could have a variety of uses associated with a rural location. It can be seen from the photograph below that an adjoining rural building next to the site and alongside Melynwyth is of a similar appearance, albeit bulkier in form.



3.03 Impact of Design

a) On Countryside

The photograph below of the dwelling buildings from the hillside show that these structures have minimal impact on the countryside.



Our earlier photograph of the parking area for the site also demonstrates that the buildings here have no impact on views from this rural lane. This is further demonstrated by the photograph below this is of the drove alongside the west boundary of the site as viewed from the road.



b) On Neighbouring Properties

These dwelling buildings create no overlooking nor overshadowing of any neighbouring buildings or residential garden.

3.04 Construction Detail

The floor is a raised timber floor comprising joists spanning between block piers built up off the bedrock. Joists are at 600mm centres with the voids filled with hard polystyrene insulation. In due course a further layer of rigid polystyrene insulation will be fixed beneath the floor joists to prevent cold bridging by these timbers and to further improve insulation levels.

Walls are of 50 x 150mm² timber studwork with studs at 600mm centres and voids filled with glass fibre insulation. This is lined externally with a breathable membrane, battens and then the larch boarding. The walls will be further insulated internally with a layer of rigid polystyrene insulation to avoid cold bridging.

The roof comprises the pvc coated steel sheeting on timber joists with glass fibre insulation between these joists. Beneath the joists is a further layer of glass fibre insulation. This is to be covered with a vapour barrier and then plasterboard and skim.

Windows and external doors have a U value of 1.2 which meets current Building Regulations.

4.00 ACCESS

a) Vehicle Access

Parking and turning on site for three cars has been created. This is shown on the block plan.

In time an electric vehicle charging point is to be provided in this area, with the Murphys looking to use electric vehicles as soon as finances permit.

Due to home schooling, home grown produce a significant reduction in working hours, car miles associated with this dwelling will be minimal by modern standards.

b) Cycling and Walking

Numerous paths exist nearby for recreational cycling and walking.

c) Disabled Access

Disabled access ramps will give access to each of these buildings. The buildings will also comply in all respects with Document M of the Building Regulations.

d) Public Transport

The site is within walking distance of public transport bus services. The following bus routes serve the site: 90, 497, 499, 890 & 900. There is also a route master type bus direct to Birmingham.

A train station at Truro is a twenty minute journey away.

From this it can be seen that the site here is very sustainable in transport terms when compared with many rural locations.

5.00 COMMUNITY

5.01 Community Investment in the Build

Heidi and Kieran have been helped enormously by friends from their church in developing this project. This extends to helping on the land, installing plumbing systems, donation of plant and machinery and the donation of building materials. Such help as well as lots of sound advice is ongoing.

5.02 Ongoing Community Involvement

Moving forward Heidi and Kieran will encourage others to take part on the project here, whether that be joining them here as a place of worship, contributing to home schooling or sharing allotment type growing spaces.

6.00 SUSTAINABLE BUILDING SERVICES

6.01 Water

Water for bathing and watering purposes will be collected on site. This will be via a 5,000 litre rainwater tank located on the top of the hill by the wood. This will be fed by corrugated steel roofing sheets approximately 14.4m² in area.

Water from the tank will be gravity fed to the buildings and to watering points on the land. Drinking water will be from the same rainwater salvaging tank but will be passed through a filtration system.

6.02 Electricity

All power to be used on the land will be via photovoltaic solar panels mounted on the roofs of the buildings and via portable units.

6.03 Space Heating and Hot Water

Within the living room is to be installed a wood burning range type cooker with a back boiler. This will create hot water to feed to radiators, will provide hot water for domestic use, whilst the range itself will be sufficient in size to heat the open plan living space.

All wood for the store will come from the three acres of woodland here. This will be constantly replenished via natural seeding and if necessary by new planting.

7.00 DEALING WITH WASTE

7.01 Grey Water

A grey water mulch basin has been constructed in front of the living room chalet.

This is fed by the sink and bathroom appliances.

It comprises numerous filtration levels through which grey water rises and then feeds suitable reed type planting.

All detergents, soaps etc to be used at the site will be plant based.

7.02 Foul Water

The buildings here are provided with composting toilets. The compost is produced on site with foul waste compost mixed with sawdust. This takes two years to reach maturity when it can be used on the land. Food waste is composted separately so as to reach maturity sooner.

7.03 Recycling

All glass, metal, paper and plastics used on site will be placed in recycling bins. This together with the composting process on site will result in minimal rubbish being needed for collection.

8.03 Trees

a) Fruit Trees

The following fruit trees will be planted alongside the existing wood on the northern side of the site:

- Apples
- Pears

The fruits from the trees will be for both eating and juicing with excess produce sold locally at farmers markets and to bed and breakfast businesses nearby, as well as exchanged or donated.

b) Nuts

Cob trees and hazels exist on site and will be complemented with new planting. Chestnut trees will also be planted within the existing woodland areas. It can also be exchanged or donated.

8.04 Wild Flower Meadows

A significant proportion of the wildflower meadows here will be retained and will be used to support a series of bee hives for the production of honey. Honey will be a source for sugar as well as being used as a spread. Any excess produce can be sold locally at farmers markets and to local bed and breakfast businesses.

8.05 Fruit Bushes

A series of fruit cages will be built along the north side of the paddock near the wood for the cultivation of raspberries, gooseberries, and blueberries. This will provide for further fruit for eating, drinking and for sale. Areas of brambles on the site that already exist will be cut back but retained and managed for their crops of blackberries. Beds for strawberries will be amongst the vegetables.

8.06 Wild Garlic

Wild garlic will be planted within the woodland and cultivated.

8.07 Herb Garden

A specialist herb garden is to be created to provide for lavender flowers, chives, thyme, rosemary, coriander and mint. Much of this can be sold locally.

8.08 The Vegetable Gardens

The following crops are proposed for the vegetable gardens. Excess produce will be sold locally and at farmers markets, as well as being donated and exchanged locally.

- Courgettes
- Celery
- Rocket
- Potatoes
- Carrots
- Parsnips
- Beetroot
- Runner beans
- Broad beans
- Sweetcorn
- Spinach
- Peas
- French beans
- Radish
- Cucumber
- Onion
- Spring onion
- Leeks
- Tomatoes
- Asparagus
- Cabbage
- Rhubarb
- Lettuce
- Red cabbage

8.00 MANAGEMENT PLAN

8.01 Employment

Kieran owns and runs a landscape gardening business. This work will be scaled back when the small holding at New Mills is being developed and when it is running. Kieran will however keep his hand in for essential cash for such items as days out, petrol, council tax, books for teaching, flour for bread making, telephone costs, medicines, tea, machinery and clothes.

Heidi will be fully employed on the site at New Mills both producing produce and home teaching.

Homemade bread will be for home consumption but with excess produce sold locally at farmers markets, donated or exchanged.

Heidi and Kieran have no requirement for alcoholic drinks nor do they smoke.

8.02 Animal Husbandry

Grass fed chickens will be kept on site in secure pens (foxes) and with night time shelters (arks). It is difficult to establish exact numbers at this stage but it is likely to be in the region of 60 – 80 chickens on site at any one time.

Chicks will be raised from young to provide meat, while chickens will also be kept for eggs.

From the meat chicken stock can be produced

Excess eggs and chicken stock can be sold locally and at farmers markets. It can also be exchanged or donated locally.

To supplement the chickens and to vary their diet Kieran and Heidi will also consider rearing other animals such as ducks and pigs.

Ducks will provide for meat, stock and eggs. Excess produce can be sold locally and at farmers markets.

Pigs will be for their own consumption.

8.09 Cooking Oils

Sunflowers will be grown on site for the production of cooking oil.

8.10 Mushrooms

A mushroom bed will be constructed and a mixture of mushroom types grown for both own use and for sale or exchange.

8.11 Organic Growing

All produce is to be grown using purely organic farming techniques.

9.00 CONCLUSION

This is an application for a One Planet Development for off grid living at New Mills. The proposals (as we have seen) comply with Cornwall County's Climate Emergency Development Plan Document February 2023, and meets the requirements of the applicants Christian way of life and set of beliefs. We set out in this document how the buildings erected on the site and how the uses to which the site is to be put, combine together to achieve the ambitions of sustainable living. In doing so this document forms the framework on how the requirements of the development plan document are to be met, and a management structure to take the proposals forward. This document is not precise in terms of quantities, costs, and time scales as this is not possible at this stage as it is dependant on factors such as affordability, successes or otherwise of the various components of the scheme, and the degree to which friends and family are able to contribute towards the project. Notwithstanding these unknowns there is a clear framework here that meets policy as follows:

- Life proposed on the site will minimize greenhouse gas emissions whilst managing waste and maximizing the use of renewable energy.
- The proposals will positively enhance ecology in the area.
- Soils on the site will be enhanced to maximize their potential.
- Car miles will be minimized by this off grid living proposal.
- No light, water nor air pollution will be created.
- The site adjoins an existing settlement that is very well served by public transport.
- This will be the applicants' sole residence and the use of the property will contribute positively to the local economy and tourist industry with their home grown produce.
- In the long term the introduction of electric vehicles here will make this a zero carbon property.
- The buildings have a low impact on the land here, and the surroundings and no impact on any neighbours.
- The proposals as set out here will meet the needs of the Murphy family within a time frame of five years from first occupation.

With the above in mind we respectfully request that planning consent is granted for this One Planet Development for a period of six years, during which the Murphys' plans can be regularly monitored.

It is accepted that after six years their efforts must be reviewed and a further planning consent applied for to stay on the land.

Should their efforts fail then we can confirm that the buildings erected on the site are all fully demountable and can be taken away without disruption to the landscape.

The Murphys are also willing to enter into a S106 agreement that will tie the buildings that are subject to this application to them personally and for living and working in association with the land here. The obligation can also extend to making this their sole residence for the period of the proposed planning consent.

For all of the reasons set out above we sincerely hope that the Local Authority and its consultees including the neighbours here, can fully support the Murphy family in their ambitions for this project.

Signature 

Dated 30th Nov 2023

Michael Shepherd B.Sc., M.R.I.C.S.
on behalf of Shattock Associates Chartered Surveyors