

Montagu Town Planning Limited

PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT, TRANSPORT AND EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

THE BARN ADJACENT TO
LAWNDOWNS BUNGALOW,
GRAMPOUND ROAD, TRURO

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE PROPOSED
CONVERSION OF THE REDUNDANT STORAGE BUILDING TO FORM A
DWELLING INCLUDING A SELF-CONTAINED ANNEXE TOGETHER WITH
ASSOCIATED WORKS

CLIENT: MISS T DAVEY

JANUARY 2024

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Montagu Town Planning Ltd, in conjunction with CJ Morford Ltd Architectural and Design Service, on behalf of Ms T Davey who owns the site.
- 1.2 This statement is submitted in support of a detailed planning application for the proposed conversion of the redundant storage building to form a dwelling including a self-contained annexe together with associated works on the application site.
- 1.3 By way of background, in May 2021 a planning application was submitted for a similar form of development as referred to above (**PA21/04809**). That application was subsequently withdrawn due to the fact that some portions of the building were still being used for storage purposes.
- 1.4 A detailed consideration of the various planning policies is provided below. That said, it is considered that the development complies with the requirements of the Development Plan for the following reasons:
 - The building which is the subject of this application exists, it is of sound construction and has an external appearance appropriate to the rural location of the property;
 - The building has existed on-site for a considerable period of time, well in excess of 10 years;
 - The existing building is redundant and was formally used for vehicle storage;
 - The building is structurally sound;
 - There are no significant extensions and additions required to facilitate the residential use of the building;
 - The site is well screened by existing, mature boundary vegetation and consequently the proposed development will not increase the prominence of the building in the countryside.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The application site measures some 1,248 square metres in extent and is enclosed by means of a traditional Cornish hedge, which runs the length of the southern boundary and a bund which runs the length of the northern boundary and a further Cornish hedge located a distance to the east.
- 2.2 The site is located approximately 630m south of Grampound Road in the open countryside. Whilst the site is located in the countryside, there are a number of dwellings which are located to the east and north east of the site.
- 2.3 The application site is developed with a single storey rectangular shaped concrete block built building, which is located to the east of the bungalow at Lawn Downs. The subject building is physical separated from the bungalow by means of a partially gravelled and concrete surfaced area, which then provides access to the sand school and fields to the north.
- 2.4 The building has a footprint measuring some 208 square metres in extent. The building is made from concrete blockwork and is covered with a fibre cement sheet roof. At its highest end the building measures some 3.4m above the natural ground level and at its lowest end the building measures some 2.6m above the natural ground level. The ground level falls gently from the north to the south over the length of the site.
- 2.5 The site is located adjacent to a complex of agricultural buildings, a farmhouse and further dwellings, all of which are located to the west and south west of the application site.
- 2.6 Vehicular access is achieved via an existing hard surfaced lane which runs along an east/west axis to the C-Class Road located to the east which runs from Fraddon to Grampound Road.

2.7 The application site is not located within any nationally designated landscape designation, nor is the site located within any locally designated landscape location.

3. Application Proposal

3.1 As has been mentioned previously planning permission is sought for the proposed conversion of the redundant storage building to form a dwelling including a self-contained annexe together with associated works. The associated works relate to the provision of a new foul sewage drainage system.

3.2 Drawing No.02 shows the location, the size and the context within which the subject building is located.

3.3 It is evident when comparing the existing plans and elevations (Drawing No.03) with the proposed plans and elevations (Drawing No.04) that the development does not require any extensions to the building to facilitate the proposed residential use. That said there are nevertheless a number of amendments that are to be made to the existing building to facilitate the proposed residential use. Those additions are (i) cladding the exterior of the building in timber, (ii) providing a number of new window and door openings and (iii) providing new fences defining the curtilage around the converted building.

3.4 The Proposed Elevations (Drawing No.04) show that the converted dwelling will be finished externally with a range of locally sourced natural materials. The building will be undercover of a mono-pitched green plastic coated roof sheets. External walls will be clad with horizontally hung timber. Timber joinery will be used throughout with double glazed glass units inserted in the windows and external doors. UPVC rainwater goods are proposed.

3.5 The Proposed Floor Plan (Drawing No.04) shows that there will be an entrance lobby, a wet room, a utility room, an open plan kitchen/dining room, a lounge, three

bedrooms, one en-suite and a family bathroom. There is also a self-contained one bedroom annexe proposed within the building.

- 3.6 Drawing No.02, The Proposed Block Plan, shows a 1.8m high timber fence to the front (west) of the building and a large rear garden to the east, the boundary of which is defined by a 1.2m high post and rail fence. Open on-site car parking is provided to the southern side of the building.
- 3.7 Foul sewage will drain to a new septic tank, whilst run-off rain water will drain to on-site soakaways.
- 3.8 The site is not one which is highly visible in the landscape mainly due to the scale of the building, as well as the fact that the site is located in the foreground of a range of other agricultural buildings in the complex. In addition to this the site is relatively well screened by existing boundary hedges. As such there is no additional landscaping proposed.
- 3.9 The following plans and documents are submitted as part of the application:
- Drawing No.01 - The Existing Topographical Site Plan (scale 1:200);
 - Drawing No.02 - The Site Location Plan (1:2500) and Proposed Block Plan (scale 1:200);
 - Drawing No.03 - The Existing Elevations (scale 1:100), Sections (scale 1:50) and Floor Plan (scale 1:50);
 - Drawing No.04 - The Proposed Elevations (scale 1:100), Sections (scale 1:50) and Floor Plan (scale 1:50);
 - A Bat and Barn Owl Survey compiled by Spalding Associates;
 - A Structural Survey compiled by Derek Grey and Associates consulting structural engineers;
 - A Foul Drainage Assessment; and
 - The Planning Policy Assessment and Explanatory Statement compiled by Montagu Town Planning Ltd.

4. Transport Statement

- 4.1 The site is located in the countryside, where there is no access to any public transport.
- 4.2 The site benefits from an existing vehicular access application site, located to the south of the subject building. This access is in the form of an existing hard surfaced lane which runs along an east/west axis to the C-Class Road located to the east. The access provides good visibility of oncoming traffic using the public highway. This access also serves as a pedestrian access, which would help walking and cycling opportunities. The Proposed Block Plan shows that there is a large vehicle parking and turning area located to the side of the building. This space is also suitable for larger vehicles.

5. Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2023 provides the Government's framework for delivering sustainable development and facilitating economic growth through the planning process. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 5.2 The introduction of the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The Development Plan for the Council covering this area of Grampound Road includes the adopted Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 - 2030.
- 5.3 The Council have recently adopted the Climate Emergency Development Plan Document (DPD) February 2023 forms part of the Development Plan.
- 5.4 The proposed scheme has been considered against the following guidance and specific policies, provided below, and is considered to be in conformity with these policies, as detailed within Section 6 of this Statement.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.5 The following sections of the NPPF are considered to relate to the proposal, namely:

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development;
- Section 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes;
- Section 11 – Making Effective Use of Land;
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places;
- Section 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment.

Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030

5.6 The formal adoption of the Cornwall Local Plan is seen as a transition to a more positive and permissive set of guidance of which to assess planning applications and planning appeals against.

5.7 The following policies are considered to relate to the proposal, namely:

- Policy 1 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development;
- Policy 2 – Spatial Strategy;
- Policy 7 – Housing in the Countryside;
- Policy 12 – Design;
- Policy 21 – Best Use of Land and Existing Buildings; and
- Policy 23 – Natural Environment.

Climate Emergency DPD 2023

5.8 The following policies are considered to relate to the proposal, namely:

- Policy C1 – Climate Change Principles;
- Policy G1 – Green Infrastructure; and
- Policy T2 – Parking.

6. Planning Assessment

Green Infrastructure

- 6.1 Policy G1 of the Climate Emergency DPD requires that green infrastructure should be central to the design of schemes. Development proposals will be expected, where appropriate to the scale and nature of the scheme, to meet with the following principles of green infrastructure design, namely, consider local landscape character, incorporate sustainable drainage, conserve and enhance local distinctiveness and include the provision of bat and bird boxes and the use of bee bricks.
- 6.2 The proposal does not result in the loss of any boundary landscaping, which is characteristic to the local landscape character of the area. The provision of bee bricks, bat boxes and bird boxes can be introduced into the fabric of the proposed building. Run-off surface water will be drained into an on-site soakaway.
- 6.3 In light of the above mentioned, the proposal will comply with the requirements of Policy G1 of the Climate Emergency DPD.

Principle of the Development

- 6.4 The NPPF recognises that planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions; however, in doing so should also take local circumstances into account, to reflect character, needs and opportunities of each area (paragraph 9). It recognises overall that sustainable development has to be a balance of economic, environmental and social factors with no one factor being dominant. Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states that development should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.5 Paragraph 78 encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, on sites where development will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

- 6.6 Paragraph 80, section c) seeks to ensure the re-use of disused buildings, located in the countryside, where this re-use would enhance the immediate setting of the building.
- 6.7 Policy 1 of the Cornwall Local Plan – Presumption in favour of sustainable development, states that *‘When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework’*. The Policy states further that *‘When considering whether a development proposal is sustainable or not, account will be taken of its location, layout, design and use against the three pillars of economic development, social development and environmental protection and improvement’*. It is evident that when considering Policy 1 to the application proposal, the development proposal clearly accords with the criteria as set out.
- 6.8 The proposed development will conform to Policy 2 through the re-use of the redundant building into a well designed, high quality dwelling; a design which demonstrates a cultural, physical and aesthetic understanding of their location.
- 6.9 Policy 7 relates to the provision of new houses in the open countryside. The Policy reiterates the advice in paragraph 80 of the NPPF where it presumes in favour of suitable constructed disused buildings that are considered appropriate to retain and would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting. The Policy requires that the building should have an existing lawful non-residential use and that the building should be ten years old or greater.
- 6.10 The building has clearly existed on the site for a considerable period of time, well in excess of the 10 years referred to in the policy. Clearly, the building has existed and is being used for a storage use for a considerable period of time, albeit that this use is no longer in operation.
- 6.11 A Visual Structural Appraisal is submitted as part of the application, which confirms that the walls of the building are structurally sound and as such the building could be worthy of conversion to facilitate the residential use proposed. New timber joinery and external doors are proposed for the building. In addition to this, a new roof covering

which will cover the entire building is proposed, which will replace the existing roof sheet covering.

- 6.12 The proposal will conserve and, indeed, enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside, through the sympathetic and well-considered conversion proposal which retains the simple, functional form and appearance of the application building.
- 6.13 For all of the reasons provided above, the proposal will comply with the requirement of Policies 1, 2 and 7 of the Local Plan, through the re-use of subject building, which is structurally sound, capable of being used as a dwelling and which will lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting.

Design and Appearance

- 6.14 Section 12 of the NPPF relates to achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 126 of The Framework accepts that the need to secure high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations, and this is clear from the high-quality design, which incorporates both traditional and modern elements resulting in a pleasing appearance.
- 6.15 As required in paragraphs 129 and 130 of the NPPF, the proposed development will add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of the development; create an attractive and comfortable place to live; optimise the potential of the site; respond to local character and reflect the local surroundings; use materials through innovative design and be visually attractive through considered architecture and landscaping.
- 6.16 Policy 12 of the Local Plan provides that development proposals will be judged against fundamental design principles of character; layout; movement; adaptability, inclusiveness, resilience and diversity; and process. The policy requires all development to be of an appropriate scale, density, layout, height and massing with a clear understanding and response to its landscape, seascape and townscape setting. The policy requires that development proposals should protect individuals and property from overlooking and unreasonable loss of privacy; overshadowing and overbearing impacts; and unreasonable noise and disturbance.

- 6.17 For the following reasons we consider that the development complies with the above mentioned policies. First and foremost, the Visual Structural Appraisal that has been undertaken confirm that (i) the building is structurally sound and (ii) capable of being converted without the need for significant extensions to facilitate the proposed conversion of the building to a dwelling.
- 6.18 The proposed design follows a fabric first approach with extremely high levels of insulation and energy efficient windows and doors. Combined with the air tightness of the building envelope and the provision of fresh air heat exchange the energy efficiency of the building will be considerably increased. With the requirement for space heating considerably reduced through the high levels of insulation and air tightness, the potential provision of an air source heat pump and ground source heat source that will serve a low temperature under floor heating system. Secondary space heating could also be provided by a wood burning stove located in the main living space.
- 6.19 Clearly there are significant visual benefits to making the existing building more recessive in appearance. The proposed design and range of finished natural external materials which will make the building appear recessive in the landscape. This will result in a development that not only respects the character of the area, but also enhances the site. The development is representative of the scale, massing, design and appearance of other similar dwellings in the area.
- 6.20 It is evident from the treatment of the external materials that the new development will properly reflect the scale and form of the dwellings to the west and will accordingly be an appropriate form of development for the site. The roof has been specifically designed so as to represent a simple uncluttered form. The windows are to be of traditional vertical emphasis, with wall to window ratios comparable with those of other dwellings in the area. It has been demonstrated on the accompanying floor plans and elevations that the proposed dwelling is wholly suitable in terms of preserving and enhancing the essential character and appearance of the area.

- 6.21 The design is representative of traditional shapes and takes design cues from similar forms of development to the north and in the surrounding area. Externally, the proposed dwelling will be finished with a range of materials that are found within the immediate area, being metal roof sheet covering, timber clad walls, timber joinery and UPVC rainwater goods.
- 6.22 Taking all of the above mentioned into consideration, it is submitted that the proposed development will accord with the requirements of Policy 12 of the Local Plan and the guidance within the Cornwall Design Guide.
- 6.23 Policy 13 of the Local Plan requires that all new development will be expected to provide sufficient, on-site open (or private amenity) space, car parking provision, and space for storage for domestic activities and recreation, as well as collection of waste, recycling and compostables.
- 6.24 The internal layout of the proposed dwelling has been referred to previously in detail. The Proposed Block Plan (Drawing No.02) demonstrates that there is ample provision of functional external space which is sheltered and functional. This space is set in a location to the rear of the converted building, where it is screened by existing vegetation and hedges and, therefore, not in a location which is highly visible. Furthermore, a vehicle parking and manoeuvring space provided to the side of the converted building is in a location on the site which is not visible from public vantage points. In conclusion, the Proposed Block Plan clearly demonstrates that adequate and suitable amenity space and car parking provisions will be provided to serve the proposed converted building.
- 6.25 The proposal accords with the advice provided in section 12 of the NPPF, Policies 12 and 13 of the Local Plan.

Best Use of Land and Existing Buildings

- 6.26 In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 119 of the NPPF the proposed development would allow for the effective and efficient use of this site. The proposed density, as required by paragraph 124, is suitable for the settlement, taking into

consideration the existing development and prevailing character of the area. The development provides a different type of housing accommodation, in order to meet the identified need.

- 6.27 Policy 21 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure the best use of land and existing buildings that are not of high environmental or historic value and increase building density where appropriate, taking into account the character of the surrounding area and access to services and facilities to ensure an efficient use of land. The policy seeks to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from development.
- 6.28 The proposed building represents a form of development that is appropriate in scale and entirely suitable to use as a dwelling. As such this development clearly demonstrates that the building and its use comply with the requirements of this policy.

Landscape Impact

- 6.29 Paragraph 174 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils.
- 6.30 Policy 23 of the Local Plan seeks to sustain local distinctiveness and character and where possible to enhance the natural environment and assets.
- 6.31 The proposal does not result in any increased built form at all. Furthermore, the proposal utilises the space around the eastern elevation of the converted building to form an amenity area serving the occupants of the building.
- 6.32 A Bat and Barn Owl Survey has been submitted and, subject to the imposition of a suitably worded condition the Applicant will comply with the conclusions set out in that survey.
- 6.33 The development does not result in any significant landscape harm and, therefore policy compliance with the above mentioned policy is achieved.

Impact Upon Highways

- 6.34 Section 9 of the NPPF relates to promoting sustainable transport. Policy 27 of the Local Plan relates to transport and accessibility. The policy requires the provision of safe and suitable access for all people and that the development should not cause a significantly adverse impact to the local or strategic road network. Furthermore, the policy requires that development be located so that the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.
- 6.35 Policy T2 of the Climate Emergency DPD both require the provision of on-site parking spaces to serve new development.
- 6.36 The historic use of the building and wider site would have generated a significant amount of vehicle movements to and from the site on a daily basis.
- 6.37 It is evident from the Proposed Block Plan (Drawing No.02) that there will be an open area to the side of the converted building which will be used to facilitate on-site parking and allow for vehicles to manoeuvre within the confines of the site. The proposed residential use of this building will not generate a significant amount of additional traffic movements, or traffic volume to and from the site. Given the small-scale form of development it is considered that there is no reason why the proposal should be refused on highway grounds.
- 6.38 The proposal will make use of the existing access arrangements and parking facilities which serve the existing building. These existing access arrangements are appropriate for the converted building, and as such modification to these access arrangements are not proposed. Further, due to the variation in the number of vehicular movements being negligible, it is not considered that the proposed change of use will introduce highway safety issues.
- 6.39 In light of this it is considered that the proposal complies with the advice provided in Section 9 of the NPPF, with the requirements of policy 27 of the Local Plan, Policy T2 of the Climate Emergency DPD.

Sustainable Development

- 6.40 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF advises that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Where development proposals accord with the development plan, as this development does, it should be approved without delay.
- 6.41 It is considered that the proposal would contribute to **economic** role through its contribution towards the local economy through employment during building operations and the purchase of materials. There will also be an economic benefit from the Applicant and their family who will be using local services, such as shops and other facilities in the area and, the income from which would help to support local services and increase the availability income spend within the surrounding and wider areas. **Socially** the development would help meet the needs of the Applicant by providing them with suitably sized well-designed dwelling including an annexe, which does not cause any significant landscape or visual harm. With regard to the **environmental** and ecological objectives, the development represents an effective and efficient use of the building and surrounding land. The proposal will result in a development that will allow this traditionally shaped building to be retained, repurposed and utilised for another use, providing the building with a new lease of life. Furthermore, it is considered that the minor change in massing through the provision of this dwelling is adequately accommodated within the site such that there is no harm to the visual amenities of the surrounding countryside. The proposed design and use of the range of local external finished natural materials protects and conserves the character and appearance of the area in which the site is located. Moreover, the change of use of this building will relieve development pressures for new development within the countryside and preventing the loss of prime agricultural land by focusing new development either on previously developed land, or on land which is no longer needed for active commercial agricultural use.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 It is considered that this is an appropriate location for the proposed development. The development accords with the guidance set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which asserts the presumption in favour of sustainable development that is at the heart of the NPPF.
- 7.2 The NPPF establishes the case for making efficient use of land and existing buildings. The Council is committed to achieving high quality buildings and places and ensuring the distinctive character of Cornwall is retained. The proposal is of a high quality and contains elements, which reinforce local distinctiveness, including appropriate local materials. The building reflects a traditional building form, which is characteristic of the area. The development has been sensitively designed, such that will result in the effective use of an existing underused resource.
- 7.3 In terms of economic benefits, the proposal will allow this building to be used to provide residential accommodation. Regarding social benefits, the proposal would provide the applicant with a well-designed building in which their family can live, and in terms of the environmental benefits, the proposal would make effective use of underutilised building, avoiding the unnecessary development of greenfield land.
- 7.4 The proposal would not give rise to any technical impacts, particularly with respect to landscape, residential amenity and highway safety.
- 7.5 The proposal is considered to comply with policies 1, 2, 7, 12, 13, 21, 23 and 27 of the Cornwall Local Plan. The development also complies with the requirements of Policies G1 and T2 of the Climate Emergency DPD.
- 7.6 By reference to the relevant policies contained in the development plan, and considering all relevant material planning considerations, it is concluded that the development that is the subject of this application is acceptable in all respects.

7.7 The proposal complies in all respects with the development plan for the purposes of Section S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Most particularly in terms of guidance contained in paragraph 11 of the NPPF and the policies, referred to above, in the Cornwall Local Plan, because the proposal is beneficial in social, economic and environmental terms and is therefore 'sustainable', planning permission should be granted without delay.