

# PLANNING AND LANDSCAPE STATEMENT

On behalf of:

**Mr and Mrs Swann**

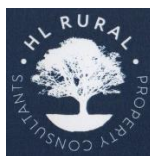
In respect of:

A Proposed Change of Use of an Agricultural Building to a Holiday Accommodation

At:

**The Old Dairy  
Wainies Brook,  
Higher Crackington,  
Bude,  
Cornwall  
EX23 0LD**

**January 2024**



**[www.hlrural.co.uk](http://www.hlrural.co.uk)**

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## **Contents:**

- 1.0 Summary
- 2.0 Disclaimer and Limitations
- 3.0 Introduction
- 4.0 Proposal & Siting
- 5.0 Planning History & Responses to Previous Concerns
- 6.0 Potential Visual Impacts
- 7.0 Existing and Proposed Landscaping
- 8.0 Highways, Transport and Site Sustainability
- 9.0 Conclusion

Appendix I – Site and Ownership Plan

Appendix II – Topographical Survey & Measured Survey

Appendix III – Historic Mapping

Appendix IV – Existing and Proposed Landscape Plan

## **1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The proposal is for the change of use of a small agricultural building which was historically used as a small dairy on the edge of the village of Higher Crackington. The application is a resubmission of a previous application with revisions to address local and consultee concerns.
- 1.2. The site is located in a sustainable location on the edge of the village. It is located 0.2 miles or a 4 minute walk from the village shop and the same distance from the bus stop in the centre of the village.
- 1.3. The use of the building for this conversion removes the need for the applicants to take up an existing dwelling in the locality for holiday use. It also involves the re-use of an existing building in line with Cornwall Council policy and planning guidance.
- 1.4. There were concerns regarding the previous application in relation to whether or not the building was worthy of retention. Since then, the applicants have undertaken research into the history of the building by talking to the previous owners who's family farmed the land for many years. They also obtained historic mapping to ascertain when the property was built and research was carried out with local historians. The building was built shortly after the end of World War II and was formerly used as a dairy building. The livestock feed troughs are integrated into the building and the external yard and these still remain. The building continued to be used in conjunction with the agricultural land until the applicants purchased the property. It is therefore considered that it is part of the social history of the area and should be retained.
- 1.5. There were previous concerns about the design of the proposed conversion due to the fact that included changes to the original structure of the building and was not considered to be in keeping with the landscape character of the AONB. In response to this, consideration has been given to AONB planning guidance and Cornwall Design Guide. The building has been designed to incorporate external materials commonly found on agricultural buildings in the area to include vertical timber cladding, corrugated metal roof sheets, galvanised rainwater goods and granite sets and stonework on the entrance drive, parking area and pathway.

- 1.6. There were concerns about the prominence of the building in the landscape of the AONB. A landscape and visual impact assessment was undertaken and an extensive landscape plan for the site has been incorporated into the proposal to ensure that the impact on the landscape is minimised and the biodiversity of the site is increased. In response to this, the parking area has been moved away from the front of the property to ensure to decrease the impact on the site. A new Cornish bank is also proposed to screen the building from the road. A bin and equipment storage area has been added in order to contain domestic paraphernalia and prevent any adverse impact on the AONB in this regard.
- 1.7. This statement has been prepared with reference to Cornwall Council Local Plan (2016), Cornwall Design Guide, Cornwall Council Climate Change Emergency Plan DPD and AONB planning guidance. The proposal relates to the conversion of an agricultural building to form a small holiday property.
- 1.8. The attached plans provide supporting evidence in relation to the proposal.
- 1.9. This planning application has been prepared and submitted by Yvonne Davies who is a planning consultant with the relevant planning experience and expertise in relation to this type of application.

## **2.0 DISCLAIMER AND LIMITATIONS**

- 2.1 HL Rural Property Consultants has prepared this report for the sole use of the named client or clients in accordance with our terms and conditions under which all of our services are performed. It is expressly stated that no other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any services provided by us. Information contained within this report document has been obtained from a variety of sources including statutory record, generally available public information, third party supplied information and through personal correspondence with the applicants.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Wainies Brook is a 0.17 hectare (0.42 acre) block of agricultural land which the applicants purchased with a view to enjoying it in their retirement. The applicants have visited the area over many years with their family and have a long standing

affection for it. They live in the South East of England and visit the area approximately once a quarter for holidays. The land was intended to be their way of getting away from the built up area and being close to nature whilst enjoying the beautiful landscape that this part of North Cornwall has to offer.

3.2 Initially the applicants intended to park their motor home on the land when they visited the land on holidays in order that they could enjoy it. Although they generally found the local people to be friendly and supportive of their use of the land in this way, there was a complaint from a local resident and this led them to consider their options in relation to how they could use the land during their holidays and whether using the existing building for holiday use while they visited the site might provide a more preferable option for the longer term.

3.3 The applicants initially applied for permission for the change of use through the permitted development. At the time, they were visiting the site on an occasional basis breaks away in their motorhome a few times per year. At the same time as visiting the site, they carried out maintenance work to it. Consequently, they were storing maintenance equipment in the building along with some personal belongings. It was therefore considered that some of the items being stored in the building were domestic and therefore it was concluded that planning permission was required. A planning application was subsequently submitted but due to concerns and objections from the AONB, the parish council and some local residents, it was decided to withdraw it and revise it in order to address these issues. This application is an amended version which it is considered addresses the previous concerns of consultees and the local residents.

3.4 The land is Grade 3 land on the Agricultural Land Classification. It is not in the flood zone.

3.5 The site is situated within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the design of the both the proposed conversion of the building and the landscaping scheme has been completed with reference to the AONB planning guidance.

3.6 The site is situated in a field enclosure which is bounded by the highway on one side, the river on the other and agricultural land on the two remaining sides.

3.7 From the applicants research into the history of the building on the site, they have discovered that it was formerly used as a small dairy building for milking a small number of dairy cows. The remains of feed troughs both inside and outside the building still exist. The exact date when the old dairy building was built is not known but from historic mapping, it appears to have been some time after the second world war. The applicants therefore consider that, although it plays a small part in the local history of the area, it is worth preserving.

3.8 With the preservation of the building in mind, the applicants wanted to design a conversion that was sympathetic to the landscape and agricultural heritage of the building.

3.9 The proposal has been designed so as to minimise alternations to the existing structure of the building. The existing walls are to be retained and the existing opening used as part of the conversion.

3.10 Externally the proposed materials have been chosen are those commonly used on agricultural buildings in the area including vertical timber cladding, anthracite grey corrugated roofing sheets and galvanised rainwater goods.

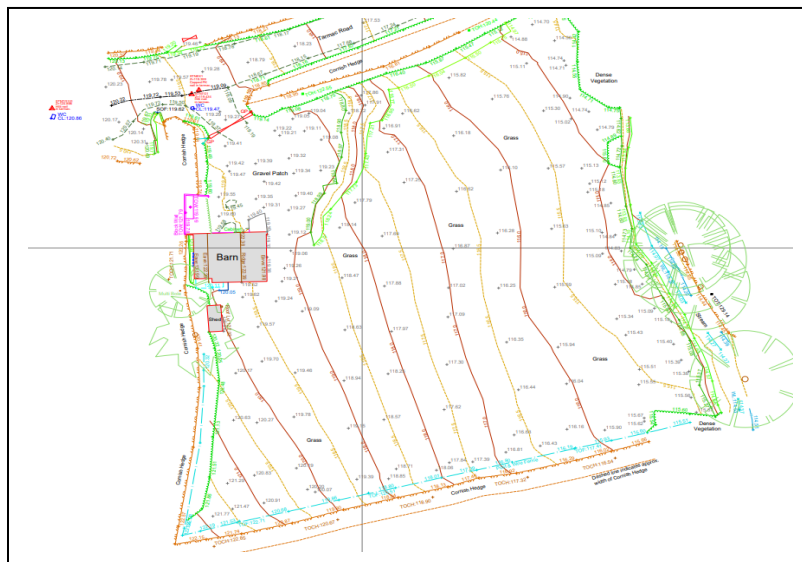


Historic Mapping Dated 1958 Showing The Old Dairy on the Site.

#### 4.0 PROPOSAL & SITING

4.1 The proposal site is identified outlined in red on the attached site plan at Appendix I.

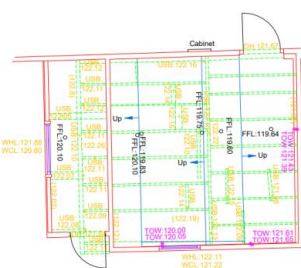
4.2 The map below is a topographical survey of the land surrounding the old dairy. The land slopes from south west to north east by just under 7 meters. The building sits against the western hedge and sits just over 3 meters below the highest point of the land in the south western corner, which sits immediately behind the building. This means that the building is very well screened from the surrounding landscape.



4.3 The entrance to the site is set back at an angle from the highway and therefore the old dairy building is only just partially visible from this vantage point.

4.4 The parameters of the building are shown on the attached measured survey drawings.

4.5 Topographical Survey



- 4.6 The building on the site is constructed with a solid concrete floor with concrete feed troughs, blockwork walls under a shallow pitched roof. It is fitted with an entrance door to the front and a window to the rear. There is a lean-to addition to the building. This is accessed via a door to the rear of the building.
- 4.7 The applicants propose to convert the internal parts of the building whilst preserving the building in its current form.
- 4.8 The proposal would be accompanied by a landscape plan. Some details in this regard are given below but the applicants are open to further suggestions.
- 4.9 Full details of the proposed design are provided on the attached elevation drawings, roof and floor plans as well as in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

**5.0 PLANNING HISTORY AND RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS CONCERNS**

- 5.1 In November 2022, the applicants submitted an application for the conversion of the building using the permitted development route under application reference PA22/10812. During this time, the applicants were using the building for storage of equipment for maintaining the land along with some of their own possessions which they used while staying at the land in their motorhome 3-4 times a year. The later was deemed to be ‘domestic storage’ and it was therefore considered that the applicant required planning permission.
- 5.2 In April 2023 a planning application for the conversion of the building with an extension was submitted under application reference PA23/01541. There were objections to this application from the parish council and the AONB along with recommendations from the planning officer for amendments and it was therefore decided to withdraw the application and make amendments in response to these comments. These are addressed in this new revised application as follows:

<b>Previous Objections or Concerns from Consultees:</b>	<b>Amendments to the Current Proposal in Response:</b>
1. <u>St Genny’s Parish Council Previous Objection:</u>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) There is no local need for the proposed conversion of the building to form a holiday property.</li> <li>(ii) The parish council had concerns that alterations had been made to the property and a planning enforcement case was initiated.</li> <li>(iii) The parish council had concerns that the original dairy building had been poorly sited and was of poor quality design. They stated that <i>'A poorly sited block built "barn" should NOT be a reason for a poorly sited residential unit.'</i></li> <li>(iv) The parish council had concerns regarding the potential impact on the landscape.</li> </ul>	<p>1. <u>Applicants' response to St Genny's Parish Council's comments and concerns:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) In this proposed application the applicants are not applying for open market housing and therefore the local housing need does not apply to this application.</li> <li>(ii) The applicants have complied with the initial enforcement investigation but no further action is being taken.</li> <li>(iii) The siting and design of the original agricultural building does not form part of this proposal. As an agricultural building built shortly after the end of World War II, the building forms part of the social and agricultural history of Higher Crackington and it is therefore considered that it should be preserved. In response to the Parish Councils concerns about the poor quality of the design of the existing building, the applicants have focused on designing a building that is in keeping with the agricultural landscape character of the area as well as following the AONB planning guidance in this regard. The aim was to ensure that the building blends into the landscape and is more aesthetically pleasing.</li> <li>(iv) These concerns have been addressed in the response to the AONB consultee comments on the last application below and our landscape impact assessment and proposed landscape plan contained within this report.</li> </ul>
<p>2. <u>AONB Consultee Concerns regarding the previous application:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The previous proposed conversion would change the building's size and character.</li> <li>(ii) The proposed parking and domestic paraphernalia created by the previous proposal would have changed the landscape character of the AONB.</li> </ul>	<p>2. <u>The Applicants Response and Amendments to the Application as a Result of the AONB Consultee's Previous Concerns:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The revised proposal does not include any increase in size from the existing footprint. It has also been designed to maintain an agricultural appearance. By using materials commonly used locally in agricultural building design as well as being recommended in the AONB planning guidance,</li> </ul>

<p>(iii) There were concerns about light pollution mentioned in the consultee response.</p> <p>(iv) Buildings should only be converted where they form part of the landscape character of the area or the history of the area.</p>	<p>the proposal maintains an agricultural appearance and character.</p> <p>(ii) The proposal has been amended to move the parking area to behind the western hedge as you look at the building from the highway. Re-enforced planting has been included in the landscape plan to assist with screening the area in the landscape. A bin storage area has been created to screen this area and this will be clad with the same vertical cladding as the main building. A Cornish bank will also be planted on the southern side of the property to help further screen it in the landscape. Natural materials such as granite stone in the Cornish bank and granite sets on the entrance drive and paths are proposed in order maintain the natural effect of the design and maintain the character of the AONB. The vertical cladding and the corrugated roof cladding on the external parts were also chosen for this reason.</p> <p>(iii) In response to the AONB's concerns regarding light pollution, the applicants have incorporated low level dimmed lighting to minimise any adverse affects on bats, wildlife and any potential impact on the AONB. In addition, the number of lights has been kept to a minimum with only one small low level light by the entrance door. The proposed roof light will be fitted with specialist blinds to prevent any light spillage at night.</p> <p>(iv) The applicants have done research into the history of the building by obtaining historic maps, talking to the previous owners of the building along with local historians. The building appears on the historic mapping shortly after the end of World War II. This was a period of great change in agriculture when there was a focus on the country becoming self-sufficient from a food production perspective and agricultural production greatly increased. The applicants understand from the previous</p>
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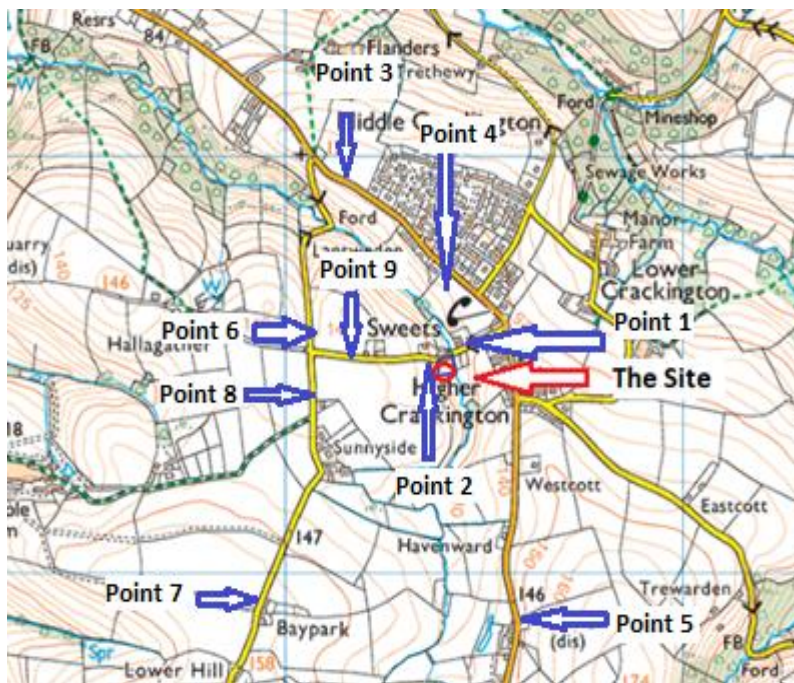
	<p>owners that the building was used as a small dairy building and the animal feed troughs remain within the internal and external parts of the building. It is intended that these will be retained and incorporated into the proposed landscaping. The history of the building points to a time when dairy farming was much less intensive than modern agriculture. This was a time when smaller farmers would milk a small number of cows to produce milk for their own use as well as cheese and butter making as well as selling small amounts locally. The building therefore forms part of the social history of Higher Crackington and it is considered it is worthy of retention for this reason.</p>
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## 6.0 POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACTS

- 6.1 The site is situated in a river valley on the western boundary of the village of Higher Crackington. It is bounded to the east by the river and mature trees, to the north by a mature Cornish hedge with mature trees beyond, to the west by a mature Cornish hedge and a large mature tree and to the south by a Cornish hedge and agricultural land sloping steeply upwards from the site.
- 6.2 The undulation of the land in the area surrounding the site is steeply sloping in places with large flat plateaus above. As the site sits in a valley with land sloping away from it in a number of areas, it could have been very visible from certain vantage points on the landscape but as it is surrounded by mature vegetation and due to the way the landscape slopes up from the site, it is tucked into the landscape and hardly visible from any point of public access, apart from the area immediately adjoining the highway.
- 6.3 The applicants intend to undertake an extensive landscaping scheme to the site in order to assist the proposed building with blending into the landscape and to enhance the biodiversity of it.
- 6.4 The Site and Surrounding Landscape:



6.5 Vantage Points:



6.6 A basic visual impact study of the area surrounding the site was undertaken. The potential impact from sites 1 to 9 as shown on the above plan was considered.

6.7 Point 1(a):



This site is immediately to the north east of the proposal site. The old dairy building is visible from the highway in this location.



There is an opportunity to create some landscape screening with some re-enforcement planting to the existing roadside hedge. As the ground where the site is located is higher than the road in this location, it might also be beneficial to plant a small copse of trees in this corner of the field enclosure to help screen the site and assist with blending it further into the landscape.

6.8 Point 2:



This vantage point is located on the north western corner of the site. It was taken from the highway. The site is not visible from this point.

6.9 Point 3:



This vantage point is situated on the road leading into Higher Crackington from the north west. It lies to the north west of the site on high ground. However the site is not

visible from this location as it is situated in the river valley below with mature trees in the foreground.

#### Point 4:



This vantage point is taken further along the highway on the northern road into Higher Crackington. Again, the site is not visible from this point. The Cornish hedgebanks are relatively low in this area and the open countryside is visible from the road in a number of places in between the residential properties. However, again this area sits on high ground and the site lies in the valley which is obscured by mature trees. The proposal site is therefore not visible from this area.

#### Point 5:



This point is located to the north east of the site along the north easter road out of Higher Crackington. This is an area of high ground and the site sits in the valley below. The site is therefore not visible from this gateway. The remaining parts of this stretch of highway are

lined with mature Cornish hedgebanks and residential dwellings. The site is therefore not visible from this area.

#### 6.10 Point 6:



This point is located to the north west of the site at the western end of the hamlet of Sweets. It lies close to the crossroads in an area where the Cornish hedgebanks are mainly high and overgrown. The road from this point leading back to the main road to the village is a narrow country lane flanked with high Cornish hedges and predominantly overshadowed by mature trees. The site is not visible from any point on this lane. The vantage point shown in the photograph above is the only break in the hedge along this stretch of the lane. It is located on high ground and the site sits below it at the bottom of the hill. It is therefore not possible to see the site from this point.

#### 6.11 Point 7:





This is a point along the road to the south west of the site. It is a high point looking down on the valley and therefore a potential vantage point. However due to the undulation of the land and the Cornish hedges, it is not visible from this point.

#### 6.12 Pont 8:



This is an agricultural field entrance with cow tracks further along the road to the south west of the site. Again due to the undulation of the land, the site is not visible from this point.

#### 6.13 Point 9:

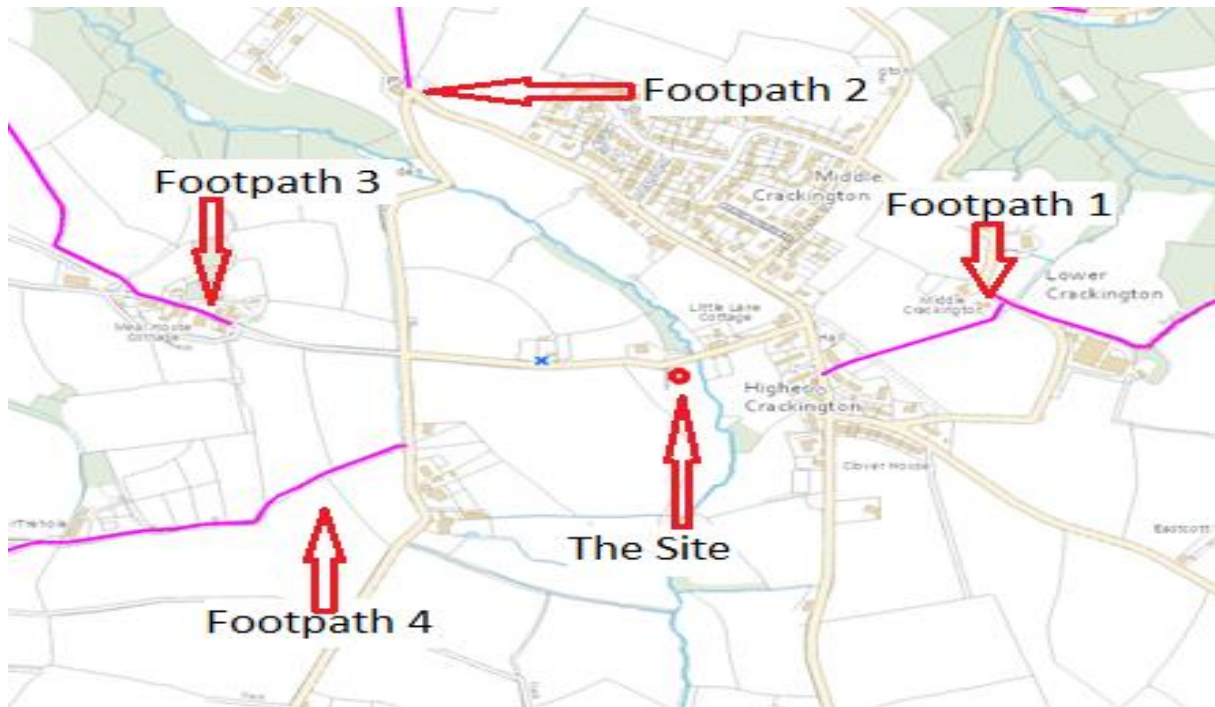


This is at the end of the road at its junction with the hamlet of Sweets. The hedges are low here and the open countryside is visible for a good distance around. However, the site sits below this area and is therefore not visible.

#### 6.14 Vantage Points From Rights of Way

We identified four footpaths in the area surrounding the site. Other than this there were no obvious bridleways or rights of way in the immediate area. The site appears to be very well screened from footpaths 1-4 as shown on the plan below due to the

undulation of the land and the mature nature of the landscaping in the area. The site therefore does not appear to be visible from these footpaths.



## 7.0 EXISTING AND PROPOSED LANDSCAPING

### Existing Landscaping:

- 7.1 The site is surrounded by mature Cornish hedges to the north and west. The hedge adjoining the highway to the north is low and allows visibility into the field enclosure in which the site is located. The eastern boundary of the site is made up of a river and mature trees. The southern boundary is made up of newer hedge planting which is well established but not yet mature. There is a mature tree adjoining the site to the west.
- 7.2 The land surrounding the site is undulating. To the rear and side, the west and south, the land slopes upwards away from the site. The site sits slightly above the highway when viewed from the north east. This is the vantage point that requires some landscaping to help the site blend into the landscape.
- 7.3 In addition to assisting with screening and blending the site well into the landscape, the applicants are keen to enhance the biodiversity of the site whilst maintaining the landscape character of it.

7.4 The field enclosure in which the site is located is laid to pasture with some rush growth where waterlogging has occurred on the eastern boundary with the river.

Proposed Landscaping:

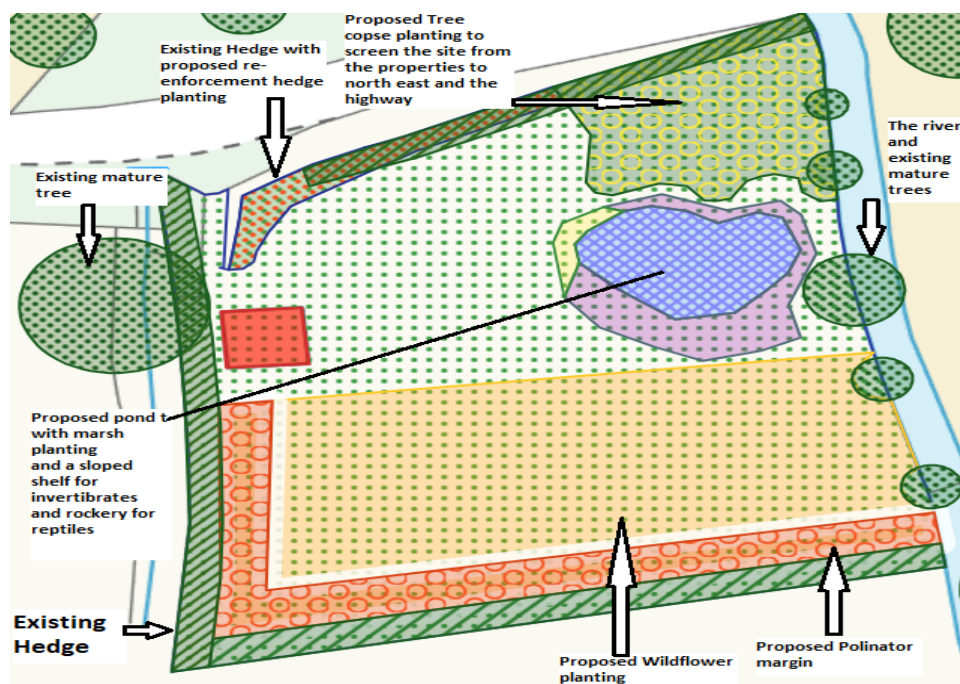
7.5 In order to help to screen the site from the highway and create further habitat for nesting birds, the applicants propose to re-enforce the hedge planting to the north of the site. This will be planted with native varieties such as blackthorn, holly, oak and dogwood. This would be undertaken in the next available planting season following permission using bare rooted stock which will be planted directly into the hedgebank and protected with tree guards until established.

7.6 In addition, the applicants propose to plant some copice tree planting in the north eastern corner of the field in order to help screen the proposal site from the road and the residential properties to the north. This planting will be completed with native species such as oak, chestnut, beech and willow.

7.7 An area of wildflowers will be planted in the southern part of the site as shown on the landscape plan below.

7.8 A pollinator margin will be planted around the edge of the wildflower area to the south of the site to support and provide habitat for bees and pollinators.

7.9 A pond area will be created in the existing waterlogged area with marsh planting around it, a rockery and a sloped entrance for retiles and invertebrates. It is hoped that this will improve the biodiversity of the site whilst being in keeping with the existing habitats.



## **8.0 Highways, Transport and Site Sustainability**

- 8.1 The site is located on the edge of the village of Higher Crackington with facilities such as a village shop and a mobile post office. These facilities are located 0.2 miles from the property which is a 0.2 minute walk.
- 8.2 The Site access has good visibility off the highway and it is not considered that any additional visibility splays are required. The site access has been used as an for agriculture for access with heavy farm machinery for many years and it is considered that the proposed use will have any additional adverse impact on the highway.
- 8.3 The site is located 0.2 miles from the centre of the village where there is a bus stop with onward links to the major local towns and Bodmin Parkway train station. It is therefore considered that the site is situated in a sustainable location from a transport perspective.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

- 9.1 The applicants are keen to preserve and enhance the site for their enjoyment and that of future generations and have revised the application to address the concerns of the parish council, local residents and the AONB.
- 9.2 It is considered that the building forms part of the social and agricultural history of Higher Crackington and is therefore worthy of retention. Materials commonly used on agricultural buildings in the area and their settings have been chosen such as vertical boarding, corrugated tin roofing, galvanized rainwater goods, granite stone and granite sets. The animal feed troughs currently forming part of the property have also been incorporated into the external landscaping to help preserve the character of the building and to serve as a reminder of its history.
- 9.3 An extensive landscape plan has been designed in response to the landscape and visual impact assessment and ecology survey. These will help to screen the

building in the landscape, improve its setting to be more in keeping with the landscape character of the AONB and improve the biodiversity of the site.

- 9.4 The design incorporates sustainable materials as well as energy and carbon saving measures in response to Cornwall Climate Change Emergency DPD 2023.
- 9.5 The application has been prepared with reference to national planning guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework along with Cornwall Council Local Plan 2016 planning policy, AONB planning guidance and Cornwall Council Design Guide and it is considered that it meets the criteria for the conversion of rural buildings to holiday use. It is therefore considered that this revised application should now be supported.

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **- Site and Ownership Plan**

# **APPENDIX II**

## **- Topographical Survey**

# **APPENDIX III**

## **- Measured Survey**



# **APPENDIX IV**

## **- Historic Mapping**

# **APPENDIX V**

## **- Existing and Proposed Landscape Plan**