



Planning Statement

# Land adjacent to Psykes Meadow Goonbell, St Agnes, TR5 0PQ

Permission in Principle  
for the Construction of 3 self-build dwellings

John Salmon, Planning Consultant

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<b>Clients</b>	Ian Heyworth, Katie Deards, Stephanie Tomlinson
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<b>Assessor/author(s)</b>	John Salmon – Planning Consultant.

## Summary

This statement accompanies an application for Permission in Principle for the construction of 3 homes for the applicants. The applicants are all part of the same local family who own the land and are wishing to live locally through the building of their own homes.

Policy 3 of the Cornwall Local Plan supports rounding off development on the edge of existing settlements. The site adjoins the settlement boundary for St Agnes, as defined in the St Agnes Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), it has been found that while the relevant NDP policies specifically allow infill development only within the settlement boundary of St Agnes, the policies are silent on the matter of rounding off, which is allowed under the Cornwall Local Plan, and the application is therefore submitted on this basis.

The scope for a Permission in Principle application is limited to considering location, land use and the amount of development; therefore, all technical details are reserved for later submission. However, it is envisaged that the site can comfortably accommodate three dwellings to meet the applicant's housing needs.

## Location and Description of Site

The site is a flat area of field that lies on the southeastern edge of Goonbell, to the rear of new two-story dwellings that form the cul de sac of Psykes Meadow. The roughly rectangular parcel is accessed between the two neighbouring plots from the north, existing residential development to the north and east, with the road to the west and a field to the south. On approach from the north, when leaving the village, the site is screened from view by existing housing, while on approach from the south, mature planting along the Cornish hedge line provides a clear boundary between the site and the more open agricultural landscape to the south. The site appears visually enclosed and seen against the backdrop of existing housing.

The site is not subject to any heritage or landscape designations but does lie within the zones of influence for both the Penhale Dunes and the Fal and Helford Special areas of conservation, and new residential development must contribute financially mitigation for potential increases in recreational impact on these areas. The context of the site is shown in the following images.



*Image 1 (and cover photo): Site location, Google Earth imagery 10/7/2022*





*Images 2 & 3: Site from road to south and Southeast (google street view 06/2023)*



*Images 4 & 5: At access to the site looking south*



*Image 6: Within site looking east.*

## Proposed Development

The intention is to construct 3 detached dwellings to meet the individual accommodation requirements of the applicants. The site would be accessed through the existing access from the north, through Psykes Meadow.

## Planning Policy Assessment

The site lies within the Parish of St Agnes, which has an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan. The policies of the NDP and the Cornwall Local Plan form the Development Plan for the area, the relevant policies of which are covered below.

### Cornwall Local Plan

**Policy 1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.** The policy sets out that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan and supporting Development Plans will be regarded as sustainable development and be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

**Policy 2: Spatial strategy.** Amongst other things, the policy states that “New development should provide a sustainable approach to accommodating growth, providing a well-balanced mix of economic, social and environmental benefits. This should maintain the dispersed development pattern of Cornwall and provide homes and jobs based on the role and function of each place”.

The proposals accord with the ethos of the policy; they would have a limited impact on the character of the area, being appropriate in scale to the settlement. It is also relevant to note that impacts on character should not fall under the assessment of a Permission in Principle application and should be considered under a subsequent technical details application.

**Policy 3: Role and function of places.** This policy is considered most relevant to applications of this nature and seeks to direct new residential development to Cornwall’s existing settlements, including villages and hamlets. The policy supports infill development, the ‘rounding off’ of settlements, and the development of previously developed land within or immediately adjoining settlements, of a scale appropriate to the settlement’s size and role. Additional clarity on assessing applications under policy 3 is provided in the accompanying Chief Planning Officer’s Advice Note on infill and rounding off (CPOAN).

In the preceding text to policy 3 of the Local Plan, Paragraph 1.68 defines rounding off as applying to “development on land that is substantially enclosed but outside of the urban form of a settlement and where its edge is clearly defined by a physical feature that also acts as a barrier to further growth (such as a road). It should not visually extend building into the open countryside.”

The CPOAN further confirms that ‘Rounding off’ allows for development within clearly defined boundaries, providing a “symmetry or completion to a settlement boundary”. It further states that development must be adjacent to existing development within long standing and enclosing boundary features, including roads and Cornish hedges.

It is clear the site meets the above definitions for rounding off.

**Policy 22: European Protected Sites– mitigation of recreational impacts from development.** The fact that the site lies within the zone of influence for both the Penhale dunes and the Fal and

Helford Sac means that mitigation should be provided in relation to any cumulative increase in accommodation in the area that may be perceived to add recreational pressure to the Sacs. Development within this area is likely to be considered habitats development by the Planning Authority, who have previously questioned whether the PIP process can therefore apply in such areas. The Authority now accepts, providing mitigation in secured with an application, the PIP process can apply. In light of this, the Applicants will submit the required s111 agreement and pay the required contributions.

**Policy 23: Natural environment.** This sets out that development proposals will need to sustain local distinctiveness and character and protect and where possible enhance Cornwall's natural environment and assets according to their international, national, and local significance. The site is not within a designated landscape and would have limited landscape impact, being visually linked to existing development more than countryside.

**Policy 27: Transport and accessibility.** As location is to be considered under this application, it is noted that access can be a consideration. It is therefore important to note that the site has a safe access with good visibility onto a straight section of highway within a 30mph speed limit. The incremental increase of movements associated with three dwellings would be acceptable in terms of highway safety.

The site is also easily accessible to all the amenities provided within the village of St Agnes, including the school and shops, and also lies on a bus route with links to Truro and Perranporth and beyond.

### St Agnes Neighbourhood Development Plan

**Policy 1** of the NDP defines settlement boundaries for the main settlements within the Parish, including St Agnes itself. Development within the boundaries is supported where it conforms to other policies in the plan. The site adjoins the defined settlement boundary on its northern boundary.

**Policy 5** requires a principal residence restriction to be imposed on new dwellings in this area. While any such conditions would be a matter for a technical details consent, such as restriction would ultimately be expected on this site.

**Policy 7** relates to infill housing schemes within the settlement boundary. and permits infill within other settlements that do not have a settlement boundary; however it is silent on the principles of rounding off and the development of sustainably located previously developed land, which are permitted under the Cornwall Local Plan.

In this regard, attention is drawn to appeal decision APP/D0840/W/19/3242527 dated 26 March 2020, for permission in principle for a dwelling at The Croft, Trevaunance Road, where the Inspector concluded *"The Croft lies outside the Settlement Boundary for St Agnes, as defined by the Neighbourhood Plan, although it borders it to the northeast and southeast. Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan says that development within the Settlement Boundary will be supported, where it conforms with other policies in the plan. Policy 7 says that small scale "infill" housing schemes will be supported within the Settlement Boundary. Although the supporting text to Policy 1 says that development outside the boundary will be treated as exception sites, neither policy places a blanket exclusion on development outside the Settlement Boundary.*

*The Examiner's Report on the Neighbourhood Plan considered the relationship between the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 - 2030 (the Local Plan) and Policy 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan. She concluded that the policy met the Basic Conditions, because it relates only to infill and is silent on "rounding off", and therefore does not preclude it in accordance with Policy 3 of the Local Plan. The simple fact that the appeal site lies outside the Settlement Boundary is not, therefore, determinative of the principle of the development."*

## National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It sets out the three roles of planning to achieve sustainable development, the economic, social and environmental objectives (para. 8).

So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the framework (para.10). Paragraph 11 confirms that for decision taking this means developments that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, and this should be the case with this application.

The following sections of the framework are of relevance at this stage:

Section 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 11. Making effective use of land

Within section 5, Delivering a sufficient supply of homes, paragraph 70 confirms that small scale sites can make a valuable contribution to meeting housing requirements in an area and encourages the support of windfall sites, giving great weight to using sites within existing settlements for homes.

The proposals are in accordance with the aims and intentions of the relevant sections of the framework. The proposals would be of social and economic benefit through the construction phase and subsequent occupation, providing homes for local people, and would have limited environmental impact.

## Conclusion

The proposed development site is well related to existing housing within the village of St Agnes. The site is visually enclosed and associated more with existing development than countryside to the south, being contained within clear and well-defined physical boundaries that would prevent further expansion of residential development.

Policy 3 of the Cornwall Local plan provides a mechanism to allow small scale residential development in such locations, through infill, rounding off, and the development of previously developed land. The site meets the criteria for rounding off on the edge of settlements, and therefore has the support of the adopted development plan policies. The dwellings would provide homes for local people and would be of social and economic benefit.

Therefore, the principle of development on the site represents sustainable development that should be approved without delay.