



PLANNING STATEMENTS
Cooper's Court, Newlyn
Proposed one-bedroom studio apartment



A report by Enhance

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The information, opinion and advice contained in this document has been prepared and provided in accordance with the RTPI's Code of Professional Conduct.



Introduction

These planning statements are provided in support of a proposal to convert the unused basement of no1 Trewarveneth Street into a small studio type apartment. It forms the resubmission of previous approvals from 2019 (PA19/00837 & PA19/00838) which have since expired.

This proposal is within a sustainable location and makes use of an existing building. The basement is located within a listed building and within the Newlyn Conservation Area. A heritage statement is included within this report and a brief works schedule is provided within the 'Design' section.

The following statements explore how the proposal accords with policies from both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Cornwall Local Plan (CLP).

Design and Access

The site is located in the basement area of number 1a Trewarveneth Street. Though in the same block as the listed building, the basement is accessed via Cooper's Court (off Fore Street), and is not visible from any public views along Trewarveneth Street, nor Fore Street.

This area of Newlyn is predominantly residential, with the site being surrounded by flats and dwellings in and around Cooper's Court. Shops and services of Newlyn are approximately a 5-minute walk away to the north. Here you can find numerous restaurants, with cafes, a bakery and a Co-op food shop. Nearby, the larger settlement of Penzance offers a more diverse range of services, and a number of large supermarkets. In addition to this, there are numerous bus stops near to the site, which offer a sustainable way of travelling to Penzance and beyond. Penzance also benefits from wider transport links to London via rail, the Isles of Scilly via sea and air and the A30 road network.



Fig 01 - Internal view showing something of the potential for conversion to a comfortable living space

The basement is accessed within Cooper's Court from a pedestrian alleyway leading from Fore Street at the rear of 6 Fore Street. The basement is located through a traditional stable door on the north-western side of the courtyard. The interior is very basic and is essentially an empty shell, rectangular in plan form, and all on one level.

Currently, there are exposed beams and there is no floor covering. The exterior wall facing Cooper's Court thick rubble stone construction, with two-deep-set windows. There are no noteworthy features within the net loft. Surface materials are plainly covered with modern cement based materials, with modern fixtures and features.

Design –

The proposal involves converting the basement into a one-bedroom apartment, with a small shower room, and an open plan studio living area.

This would result in minimal change. The access to the basement will remain through the existing doorway. This will lead into an open plan kitchen and living area. There will be a new kitchenette installed, with space for a dining table and chairs including sofa and television. From the living area there will be access into a shower room.

The studio area will lead into a double bedroom separated from the living area with standard stud-partition walls. There will be space for a bed and bedroom furniture. The bedroom will also feature storage space.

Materials used to line the walls and floors will be adequately resistant the spread of fire, damp and sound. This will be standard fireboard and plaster board included at ceiling level. It will be possible to upgrade the walls and the floor without harming the historic fabric of the listed building.

Ventilation will be provided with minimal intervention, ducted through the ceiling void to the outside of the property.

Existing window openings will be retained and no new openings created. The window units are of a style that is uncharacteristic for the building, and do not appear to be original. The windows will be kept in the same location, providing one window in the bedroom and one in the living area.

The higher section of the stable door will also maximum light into the living space. The current windows in the property are modern and will be replaced with double glazed units, of a similar casement style to the original, opening to allow ventilation.

Access –

This proposal will continue to make use of the existing access point. Due to the nature of the historic building and the setting, there is a single small step down once through the basement door, otherwise level access is provided throughout.

The proposal will fully comply with all current Regulations and Good Practice where possible, making the scheme accessible in line with current policies and legislative requirements.

Heritage Impact

The settlement of Newlyn has been named as early as the 13th century, and was originally made up of a small scatter of hamlets. The name ‘Newlyn’ is derived from the Cornish lulyn, which means ‘fleet pool’. During the 18th and 19th centuries the fishing industry in Newlyn gained in importance, and the size and status of the town grew.



Fig 02 - Panorama image of Cooper's Court with the proposed basement apartment to the right

The traditional Cornish fishing village that Newlyn became attracted artists in the late 1800s. They painted the scenes of the town and the harbour, and steadily grew in number forming the Newlyn School. Newlyn had become a tight-grained village, with cobbled streets and thatched rooves. In the 1930s large areas of traditional cottages and streets were scheduled for demolition, to make way for modern development. This was highly opposed. The sailing of Newlyn ship The Rosebud, and the arrival of World War 2 saved many areas of Newlyn from demolition, so that its original character still survives today. Though there have been modern alterations such as slate rooves and UPVC windows, the essential character of the place remains.

This site is located within a Grade II listed building. The list description is:

Early C18. Stuccoed. Steep slate roof with half-hipped end facing harbour with large late C19 splayed bay window on 1st floor and doorway under. 2 storeys Side elevation to Trewarveneth Street has 1st floor sash and ground floor small shop window with pilasters and fascia, large side chimney stack and external stone steps to 1st floor doorway with glazed porch.

The main building is labelled as an art gallery by Historic England. It is possible that the building had ties with the Newlyn School, which was centred further along the hill on Trewarveneth Street. There are no physical remains today to indicate the building's historic use as an art gallery.

The list description for the property describes features of interest on the exterior of the building, with no mention of internal features. The building is a good example of the grander buildings that line Fore Street, with smaller cottages located to the rear. Due to this basement being accessed from Cooper's Court, it does not contribute to the main elevation as mentioned in the list description.

Inside the basement there are no discernible features of heritage value. The beams appear to be relatively modern, and there are no decorative historical features adorning the walls or floors

which are covered in modern cement based material. The stable door is of traditional timber. Former windows were of single pane, fixed shut, and plainly timber frames with subtle machined mouldings.



Fig 03 - The bare ceiling and modern materials

In addition to the site-specific heritage, the site is within the Newlyn conservation area, within a historic part of the town. The characteristic of Fore Street is grander, with more imposing buildings lining the street front and overlooking the harbour, with smaller buildings and courtyards to the rear. This site is an example of this characteristic, the basement being located within Cooper's Court, to the rear of the main building at the street front. The basement is not visible within the wider conservation area, just within Cooper's Court.



Fig 04 - Former windows – single pane, single-glazed, un-opening, with machined frames.

Historic Significance –

The building was constructed in the early 18th century, and has been altered to include a large splayed bay window in the late 19th century. The building is an example of the proud townscape, built facing across Newlyn harbour, with small, more informal courtyards to the rear. The front elevation of the building forms a part of a historic frontage that runs along Fore Street in a prominent position above the harbour.

Cooper's Court exhibits more practical, informal architecture, in contrast to the grand front elevations. As a result, there is a possibility that the basement could have been used as a fish cellar, for example, used for net storage or housing a pilchard-press. However, modern change has taken place across the entire building throughout the last hundred years which has resulted in there being no evidence of any possible earlier uses. Today the character of the internal space within the basement is very much of the later decades of the 20th century.

Cultural Significance –

The entire building holds cultural significance through association, and while being located on the edge of Newlyn harbour, it has featured in the streetscapes and harbour scenes that were painted by the famous Newlyn School. The Trewarveneth Street and Fore Street elevations are highly visible and are an integral part of the harbour scenery. The Newlyn School painted the typical Cornish scenes that occurred next to the proposed site. However, the site itself is hidden from these views and therefore has a notional cultural value while being physically connected to a wider valued scene.



Fig 05 - Internal view showing existing features with modern materials and finishes

Aesthetic/Architectural Significance –

External elevations which front into Cooper's Court are particularly modest compared to the more decorated elevations that front Trewarveneth Street and Fore Street. As existing, the main elevational walls are built of traditional stone, with small, unordered windows presented under a traditional slate roof. Internal architectural detail of any aesthetic value is absent from the building while it has suffered a century of change and adaption, more recently characterised from

the cement finishes to walls and floor. The elevations of other buildings that face into Cooper's Court are also traditional stone. The courtyard has a historic appearance, and has been largely structurally unaltered, with only modest cosmetic changes.

Impact

It is essential that the current windows are replaced during the development process. The new windows will be especially chosen to mirror the former timber originals and not cause harm to the listed building. These external alterations, will only be viewed from within the private courtyard area, will be entirely modest, avoiding impact on the architectural and historic values of the site and the setting heritage assets.

Internal alterations will have no effect on any features of architectural or historic value while the existing fabric is absent of any special interest.

The proposal provides opportunity for the continued use of the site to benefit the building and the courtyard, through improved use and continued upkeep and maintenance of the building.

Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Chapter 2. Achieving sustainable development

There are three over-arching objectives within the planning system that ensure sustainable development can be achieved. The economic objective endeavours to build a strong and competitive economy through providing the right types of land in the right places at the right time. The social objective strives to support a strong community by ensuring that there is a sufficient number and range of homes available in the right places. The environmental objective aims to contribute to the protection and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment through making effective use of land.

This proposal provides a home in a sustainable location within a settlement and within an existing building, it will contribute to the conservation of the area by preventing the listed building from falling into disrepair.

Chapter 9. Promoting sustainable transport

When assessing applications for development, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes have been taken up, safe and suitable access to the site can be provided for all users, and any significant impacts on the highway network can be mitigated.

This proposal is located within reach of local services and bus routes, there is safe pedestrian access to the site, and there will be no significant impacts on the local highway network due to the small scale of development and the fact that there will be no parking provided on site, encouraging residents to make sustainable transport choices.

Chapter 11. Making effective use of land

Planning decisions should encourage an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes, and there should be a preference given to proposals located on previously developed or brownfield land.

This proposal is located within an existing building and does not result in an increase in built footprint and provides a highly efficient use of resources.

Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

Planning decisions should ensure that developments will add to the overall quality of the area over the lifetime of the development, are visually attractive, and are sympathetic to local character and history.

This proposal involves creating a 1 bedroomed studio flat in an existing traditional dwelling. The new use will allow this part of the building to be preserved, helping to maintain the character of the setting.

Chapter 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Planning applications should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposal, including the contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the assets.

This statement explores the history of the building, and the impacts that this proposal would have. The basement itself lacks any noteworthy heritage features, the important aspects of the listed building are on the opposite side, disconnected from the basement and Cooper's Court. The wider conservation area would benefit from this proposal, though in a small area, by preserving the basement, and preventing the interior and exterior from falling into disrepair.

Cornwall Local Plan (CLP)

Policy 1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

This policy states that planning applications that can demonstrate an accordance with the local plan should be regarded as sustainable development and approved. A proposal's location, layout, design and provision of social, economic and environmental benefits will be taken into account.

This proposal accords with multiple policies from the local plan, as will be demonstrated, and will provide support for the local economy when occupied, being located sustainably within the settlement.

Policy 2: Spatial Strategy

Development within Cornwall should provide a sustainable approach to accommodating growth, provide social, economic and environmental benefits, and maintain the dispersed development pattern of Cornwall. Proposals should aim to respect and enhance the quality of place, provide solutions to current and future issues, and generate and sustain economic activity.

This proposal offers a dwelling in a sustainable location within an area of Newlyn with a high built density. There would be support provided to the local shops and services, and in addition to this the proposal would conserve the character of the area and the building, by not making drastic changes to the exterior of the building.

Policy 3: Role and function of places

Development within Cornwall should be provided within the main towns, either infill, rounding off, and on previously developed land.

This proposal directly accords with this policy 3 being located within the main settlement and involves the creation of a new dwelling within previously developed land.

Policy 12: Design

Cornwall Council is committed to achieving a high quality of design in all development. Designs must ensure that Cornwall's distinctiveness and character are enhanced and protected, respecting the historic and natural character.

This proposal involves the use of a historic building, and so is helping to conserve and protect local character by giving the building a continued use and preventing it from falling into disrepair.

Policy 21: Best use of land and existing buildings

This policy states that proposals should strive to make the best use of land. Encouragement will be given to sustainably located proposals that use previously developed land, and increase the building density where appropriate.

This proposal is making use of a basement within an historic building. This offers an opportunity to increase the building density in an appropriate location, redeveloping part of an existing building.

Policy 24: Historic environment

Development proposals should aim to sustain Cornwall's historic, rural, urban and coastal significance. This should be achieved by protecting, conserving and enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated assets and their settings.

This proposal is located within a Grade II listed building within a Conservation Area, in the historic town of Newlyn. The proposal does not involve drastic changes to the exterior of the building, so will not majorly alter or change the significance of the listed aspects. The redevelopment of the interior will allow for the basement to have a new use, preventing it from becoming neglected and deteriorating in quality, which would have a detrimental effect on the rest of the listed building.

Green Infrastructure

Cornwall's Climate Emergency Development Plan Document is a functional part of the development plan for the area. Its policies aim to protect and shape the future by addressing the impacts of climate change through appropriate management of the built and natural environment, whilst planning for a sustainable future.

Policy C1 (Climate Change Principles) sets out Cornwall's main priorities for minimising greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing resilience, supporting community well-being, conserving soil quality, protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainable transportation, preserving natural and historic environments, reducing pollution, enhancing carbon storage, and managing coastal and river processes effectively.

Policy G1 (Green Infrastructure Design and Maintenance) emphasises the importance of incorporating green infrastructure into development schemes to enhance biodiversity and create functional spaces. The policy outlines key principles for green infrastructure design, including creating a multifunctional network that connects natural features, ensuring accessibility, integrating sustainable drainage and blue infrastructure, promoting climate resilience, and

prioritising pollinator-friendly planting. It highlights the integration of street trees and greening while respecting the historic environment. The policy also emphasises the provision of well-proportioned gardens or communal green spaces, long-term management and maintenance of green infrastructure, and the inclusion of bird and bat boxes and bee bricks which are tailored to habitat conditions.

While meeting these imperatives, the following statement demonstrates the way in which green infrastructure (GI) can be incorporated into the proposed development.

The proposal comprises minimal external areas while including works of repair and maintenance.

The proposal has been considered whilst following the '10 pillars for action', which aim to help nature regeneration, and to provide the natural foundations for a green recovery, as set out by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership. Integration of these green infrastructure measures within the proposed development will provide environmental benefits, fostering ecological and biodiversity gains, and enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents.

Flood Risk Statement

The site is within Flood Zone 1 and is situated within the Penzance Critical Drainage Area.

This proposal is for the creation of a studio apartment in the basement/residential storage area of 1 Trewarveneth Street. It involves no change to the existing footprint of the building, nor the extent of exterior hard surfacing.

While the proposal includes only minor works leading to the renewal of the existing building, without extension or substantial building works, there will be no material change to drainage nor would the proposal increase flood risk.

Conclusion

This proposal involves converting a basement secluded within Cooper's Court to a 1-bed studio apartment. Located within a listed building and a conservation area, the basement is currently redundant and without purpose or continued use.

While in modern condition, exhibiting few features of architectural or historic interest, the modest proposal would cause no substantial harm to the listed building, while leading to a moderate improvement in the immediate surroundings of Cooper's Court, and within the conservation area, through reuse and ongoing repairs to the building.

As demonstrated above, this proposal accords with the relevant policies from national and local planning documents.