



Policy Intentions - Draft

The following sets out some suggested policy intentions that amplify the objectives previously circulated and act as a precursor to the actual drafting of the policies. The objectives are the same as those previously suggested and published in the February edition of the Packet (119).

Before considering these please note the context in which they **must** operate under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Cornwall Local Plan.

The full text of the Cornwall Local Plan can be found at:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/adopted-plans/#localPlan>

The full text of the *current* NPPF can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

A public consultation has been undertaken in relation to the NPPF. More on this can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy>

Housing

Objective: to ensure that any housing development that takes place within the Parish meets local housing needs.

Policy Intentions:

- Aim to list which settlements are appropriate for infill and rounding off. (These terms are defined in the appendix to this document). Three settlements were specifically described in the Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) report: Widemouth, Bangors and Treskinnick – where the ‘edges’ of these settlements are described. The LLCA report is available on our website. See also the responses to Question 5 of our Questionnaire 2022: “are there any sites in the parish that could be developed for new homes”. This can also be found on our website.
- All new housing apart from replacement dwellings - to be for “Principal Residences” only (ie not second homes or holiday homes/lets).

For more information see:

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/can-access-to-housing-be-restricted-to-local-people/>

- ‘First homes’ for people living in the area. First homes are homes sold at a specified discount (to be determined) to market value and as such are considered to meet the definition of ‘affordable housing’ for planning purposes. First homes would be required to comprise a specified proportion of certain new housing developments (if any).

For more information see:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes#first-homes-eligibility-criteria>

- Building is demonstrably in response to *local housing needs*. Housing to be small/affordable. (See the responses to questions 7 and 8 of our Questionnaire 2022.)
- Small scale rural exceptions where they contribute to affordable housing needs of local people and development is subject to an agreement to ensure this. These would require the support of the Parish Council.
- Housing association/ trust development to be supported in locations in existing settlements or adjacent to them.
- Save as above, Local Plan Policy 7 applies (the text is in the appendix to this document).

Objective 2 Drainage: to support development which has adequate and sustainable drainage and sewerage within the Parish.

- Must be adequate provision and capacity (for example own septic tanks where required).
- Appropriate drainage to deal with/avoid flooding.

Objective 3 Design: to ensure that the design of new buildings within the Parish, and of modifications and extensions to existing buildings, are appropriate in the context of surrounding buildings and respect the local, rural (including coastal) character of landscapes.

- Development (planning permission and permitted development) to be a specified distance from neighbouring buildings and boundaries. This spacing would be consistent with that around other buildings in the surrounding landscape.
- Visually integrated with surrounding landscape: scale of individual buildings, number of buildings, materials, building form.
- Not intrude on or impede views and ridgelines.
- Use/ protect hedging/ stone walling.
- Appropriate off-road parking.
- Low energy building design and usage. (Although note this is now covered by the Climate Emergency Development Plan Document).

See further:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/adopted-plans/climate-emergency-development-plan-document/>

- Limit external lights to protect night sky. They must have full shielding and be subject to maximum measurements of light emission (to be specified).
- Where development allows create new footpaths (and cycle paths) to connect to existing paths.

Note: There was almost no support for encouraging outstanding and innovative designs – see the answers to Question 8 of our Questionnaire 2022.

Objective 4 Landscape: to ensure that the Parish maintains the distinct identity of settlements and hamlets, avoiding further coalescence between them.

- Avoid coalescence particularly along the A39.
- All development to demonstrate (if relevant) how they are consistent with maintaining LLCA descriptions. (See for example paragraphs: 5.2.15 (Widemouth), 5.3.15 (Bangors) and 5.4.14 (Treskinnik)).
- Must conserve and enhance landscape character and scenic beauty.
- Any development in the AONB must show how it complies with the Cornwall AONB Management Plan 2022-2027 (see for example the policies and objectives relevant to our Parish at p.142ff. The Plan can be found at:

https://assets.cornwall-aonb.gov.uk/AONB_Management_Plan_12-04-22.pdf

Note: we are also looking into the issue of coastal flooding and coastal land management and may seek to introduce a policy related to this. The *current* Cornwall plan is the Cornwall Shoreline Management plan 2011 (which includes Widemouth in Policy Development Zone 16, area 39). It was revised in 2016. See the links below. The Environment Agency's National Coastal Erosion Risk Map has Widemouth Bay described as "Managed Realignment": allowing the shoreline to move naturally but managing the process to direct it in certain areas". See also paragraph 159 of the NPPF in the appendix to this document.

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/n0zhrcrci/pdz16.pdf>

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/pbwhdac1/cornwall-smp2-mid-term-review-appendix-ma19-ma40.pdf>

Objective 5 Natural Environment and Biodiversity: to protect and enhance the outstanding natural beauty of landscapes, including coastal areas, both within and without the SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and AONB (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and to ensure that development across all parts of the Parish supports not only the conservation of biodiversity but also net biodiversity gain.

- Maps of areas of biodiversity interest will be included. These can be found in the LLCA report on our website. See also para 179 a of the NPPF.
- Map key geological features of outstanding national importance.
- Safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity to be at the forefront of any development.
- Onsite retention and enhancement as priority over mitigation.

- Protect 'linked' areas, hedges, non-TPO trees.

Note: Net biodiversity gain will be a statutory requirement after this autumn when the Environment Act kicks in]

Objective 6 Historic landscape: to safeguard heritage assets, historic landscapes and their setting across the Parish for current and future generations.

- To protect non-designated historic/ archaeological assets
- Use the plan to identify non designated heritage assets. See for example the LLCA which refers to some of these.

Objective 7 Economy and Business: to support businesses that are appropriate within the rural landscape of the Parish.

- Support/ encourage small businesses and enterprises (consistent with the objectives referred to above).
- Support agricultural diversification provided this is additional to the main agricultural function of the land and agriculture should remain the dominant land use in order to preserve the landscapes which have resulted from farming activity.

APPENDIX: EXTRACTS FROM CORNWALL LOCAL PLAN AND NPPF

Please note the extracts below are not the only parts of these documents that are relevant to neighbourhood planning. If you want a full understanding of the planning context please refer to the full documents.

Cornwall Local Plan

Part of the justification for Policy 3:

Paragraph 1.68:

In smaller villages and hamlets in which ‘infill’ sites of one-two housing units are allowed, the settlement should have a form and shape and clearly definable boundaries, not just a low-density straggle of dwellings. The settlement should be part of a network of settlements and / or be in reasonable proximity to a larger village or town with more significant community facilities, such as a primary school. Neighbourhood Plans can provide detailed definition on which settlements are appropriate for infill and boundaries to which the policy will operate.

Rounding off: This applies 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.

Previously developed land: In principle the use of previously developed land within or immediately adjoining the settlement will be permitted provided it is of a scale appropriate to the size and role of the settlement.

Rural Exception sites: These are affordable housing led developments adjoining, or physically well related to, the built form of existing settlements, (they allow for a proportion of market housing where it is required to support delivery of the affordable element). The definition of these sites is set out in Policy 9 of the Local Plan.

Policy 3: Role and function of places

The scale and mix of uses of development and investment in services and facilities should be based on the role and function of places. New development up to 2030 will be accommodated in accordance with the following hierarchy:

[.....]

3. Other than at the main towns identified in this Policy, housing and employment growth will be delivered for the remainder of the Community Network Area housing requirement^[SEP] through:

- identification of sites where required through Neighbourhood Plans;
- rounding off of settlements and development of previously developed land within or immediately adjoining that settlement of a scale appropriate to its size and role;
- infill schemes that fill a small gap in an otherwise continuous built frontage and do not physically extend the settlement into the open countryside. Proposals should consider the significance or importance that large gaps can make to the setting of settlements and ensure that this would not be diminished;
- rural exception sites under Policy 9.

4. Within the AONB or its setting, development will be supported where it is in accordance with the other policies of this Plan and can demonstrate that it conserves and enhances the landscape character and natural beauty of the AONB.

Policy 6: Housing mix

New housing developments of 10 dwellings or more should include an appropriate mix of house size, type, price and tenure to address identified needs and market demand and to support mixed communities. Proposals should seek to:

- Address need and demand for affordable, market housing and starter homes including self-build and custom-build housing; and
- Use local evidence of the need and demand for specific types, tenures and sizes of housing to contribute to the diversity of housing in the local area and help to redress any housing imbalance that exists; and
- Respond to the requirements of a changing population and of particular groups in the community, by increasing the supply of accessible and specialist housing (including ground floor flats, flats with lifts and bungalow accommodation) which is able to meet people's needs throughout their lifetimes based on locally derived evidence of need and demand.

2. On sites of 200 dwellings or more, additional specialised housing (including extra care housing) should be considered where demand exists, to meet defined specialist needs.

Policy 7: Housing in the countryside

The development of new homes in the open countryside will only be permitted where there are special circumstances. New dwellings will be restricted to:

1. Replacement dwellings broadly comparable to the size, scale and bulk of the dwelling being replaced and of an appropriate scale and character to their location; or
2. the subdivision of existing residential dwellings; or
3. Reuse of suitably constructed redundant, disused or historic buildings that are considered appropriate to retain and would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting. The building to be converted should have an existing lawful residential or non- residential use and be ten years old or greater; or
- 4 Temporary accommodation for workers (including seasonal migrant workers), to support established and viable rural businesses where there is an essential need for a presence on the holding, but no other suitable accommodation is available and it would be of a construction suitable for its purpose and duration; or
- 5 Full time agricultural and forestry and other rural occupation workers where there is up to date evidence of an essential need of the business for the occupier to live in that specific location.

Policy 8: Affordable housing

All new housing schemes within the plan area on sites where there is a net increase of more than 10 dwellings or where dwellings would have a combined gross floorspace more than 1,000 square metres (not including replacement dwellings) must contribute towards meeting affordable housing need.

In Designated Rural Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the threshold will be more than 5 dwellings. For developments of between 6 and 10 dwellings in such areas a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing will be sought per unit of affordable housing that would have been provided. [...]

[...] However, the target provision for affordable housing (other than starter homes) is typically in the following tenure proportions:

70% rented homes owned or managed as affordable housing, provided that the initial rent level (inclusive of any relevant service charges) does not exceed the local housing allowance

30% intermediate housing for rent or sale, provided that the homes are available at first and subsequent occupation at a price which is affordable to a typical local household, taking into account the estimated purchasing power in such households.

As and when by the Housing and Planning Act (2016) and subsequent Regulations, the provision of affordable housing will include an element of starter homes to meet the needs of qualifying households.

Planning obligations will be used to ensure that affordable housing is provided and (where possible) retained for eligible local households.

Any of site contributions must be broadly equivalent in value to on site provision and secured to support the delivery of affordable housing through a planning obligation.

A financial or other contribution will be sought from proposals to remove holiday occupancy restrictions on existing dwellings using the thresholds set out above where there is evidence of need and where development would otherwise have been provided on site for community infrastructure including affordable housing.

Where the splitting of a site would result in two or more sites that are physically adjoined, the Council will consider the capacity and suitability of the entire developable area for the purpose of determining whether it falls above or below the affordable housing thresholds. This includes situations where the density or number of units in a proposal is lower than might reasonably be expected.

Policy 9: Rural Exceptions Sites

Development proposals on sites outside of but adjacent to the existing built up area of smaller towns, villages and hamlets, whose primary purpose is to provide affordable housing to meet local needs will be supported where they are clearly affordable housing led and would be well related to the physical form of the settlement and appropriate in scale, character and appearance.

The number, type, size and tenure of the affordable dwellings should reflect identified local needs as evidenced through the Cornwall Housing Register or any specific local surveys completed using an approved methodology.

The purpose of such developments must be primarily to provide affordable housing. The inclusion of market housing will only be supported where the Council is satisfied it is essential for the successful delivery of the development based on detailed financial appraisal (For example to fund abnormal development costs or to deliver a balanced, sustainable community).

Market housing must not represent more than 50% of the homes or 50% of the land take, excluding infrastructure and services.

The Council will secure the first and future occupation of the affordable homes to those with a housing need and local connection to the settlement or parish in line with the Council's adopted local connection policies.

NPPF

Plan-Making

16 Plans should:

- a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;
- b) be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;
- c) be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;
- d) contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;
- e) be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and
- f) serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).

Non-strategic Policies

28 Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.

29 Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.

30 Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently

Rural housing

78. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, **including development proposals from community-led housing groups**. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

84 Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

85 Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

Planning and flood risk

159 Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

160 Strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, and should manage flood risk from all sources. They should consider cumulative impacts in, or affecting, local areas susceptible to flooding, and take account of advice from the Environment Agency and other relevant flood risk management authorities, such as lead local flood authorities and internal drainage boards.

Habitats and biodiversity

179 To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Cornwall Shoreline Management 2011

PDZ 16

PDZ Management Intent

The overarching management principle is therefore to allow the natural evolution of the coast, which should retain the tourism and amenity values of the area while recognising the need to maintain the identity of the coastal settlements. Supporting the long-term adaptation and resilience of Bude and Widemouth to coastal change will be a key part of the management intent for this area.