

Our Ref: DfE/NDP/FS1007

10 June 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Perranzabuloe NDP Pre-submission (Regulation 14) Consultation**

**Submission of the Department for Education (DfE)**

1. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of planning policy at the neighbourhood level.
2. Under the provisions of the Education Act 2011 and the Academies Act 2010, all new state schools are now academies/free schools and DfE is the delivery body for some of these, rather than local authorities. However, local authorities still retain the statutory responsibility to ensure sufficient school places, including those at sixth form, and have a key role in securing contributions from development to new education infrastructure.
3. In this context, we aim to work closely with local authority education departments and planning authorities to meet the demand for new school places and new schools. We have published guidance on education provision in garden communities and securing developer contributions for education, at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivering-schools-to-support-housing-growth>.
4. Due to a requirement to deliver a new school in the Neighbourhood Plan area, we would like to offer the following comments in response to the text and supporting policies outlined in the above consultation document.
5. This submission supports that submitted by the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT) on 7 June 2022, who will be operating the new school and discussing the project with a number of local stakeholders.

**New Secondary School Site**

6. The department notes that the introduction to the Leisure and Wellbeing section of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) (9.1) states that:  
*“The construction of a new secondary school in the Parish has recently been announced although the exact location is not yet known.”*
7. A new secondary school to serve pupils aged 11-16 from North Cornwall’s dispersed largely rural and coastal communities was approved by the department into ‘pre-opening’ in early 2021.

8. The school will be funded by the department, but planning permission will be sought by a contractor, who will also build the school. On completion, the site will be handed over to the TPAT.
9. Since early 2021, a site search has been ongoing in collaboration with Cornwall Council. The search initially identified thirteen possible sites which were, following due diligence and discussions with Cornwall Council's education and planning departments, reduced to a shortlist of three.
10. Following further due diligence and discussions with landowners, a preferred site was identified in the autumn of 2021. The site was selected on the basis that it suited the heatmap of educational demand in North Cornwall, met the space requirements for a 1,350 place school, was located close to an existing primary school run by the Trust and was well located in terms of accessibility. A site plan, with the boundaries marked in red, is provided at Annex A.
11. The DfE, via a Technical Advisory firm (Faithful and Gould), has started work on a Feasibility Study, which examines how the site could accommodate the school and all of its associated facilities. Part of this process includes developing a Control Option, which sets out the preferred layout of the site. Before the Control Option is settled, pre-application advice will be sought from Cornwall Council. Part of that discussion will include the draft policies of the NDP.
12. It is noted that the Community Consultation Draft of the NDP included a settlement gap between Perranporth and Bolingey, which was located to the direct north of the school site. The settlement gap, in the Pre-submission (Regulation 14) consultation draft (Appendix 8), has increased in size and now encompasses the majority of the school site.
13. It is recognised that the design of the school, as it progresses, will need to seek to take into account the role the site plays in providing a green visual separation and buffer between Perranporth and Bolingey. It will also need to consider the impact of the scheme on important views and vistas, including those set out at Map 10 and Policy NE7 of the Pre-submission draft.
14. Accordingly, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be prepared to determine how the placement of new buildings, hardstanding and areas of playing field could achieve this. This will ensure that the visual impact of the development is reduced as far as reasonably practical, whilst still providing the school places needed within North Cornwall. Paragraph 95 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the policy context when providing for school places.
15. The project, whilst creating some built form between Perranporth and Bolingey, will achieve other aims of the NDP, namely preventing any further residential infilling within the boundaries of the school site. It would also partially retain the openness on those parts of the site which will be landscaped and accommodate the playing fields.
16. As the exact location of the new secondary school is known, the department requests that the NDP is amended to take this piece of education infrastructure into account, recognising that the scheme will need to be designed to take into account visual impact and the respective settlement boundaries of Perranporth and Bolingey.
17. It is the department's preference that the settlement gap reverts to that as presented at the Community Consultation Draft stage. This matches Map 9 and

the text of the NDP at 6.2.2 i) of the Pre-submission draft, which confirms the gap including:

*“land between Bolingey Road to the south and Hendrawna Lane to the north”.*

18. This would allow the project to come forward without conflict with the NDP, whilst still needing to satisfy other policy requirements which will ensure it has an acceptable impact on the surrounding landscape.
19. It should be noted that Map 9 and the accompanying text does not currently match the plan at Appendix 8. This reversion would achieve the aim of maintaining the strategic gap, whilst also facilitating the delivery of required education infrastructure.

### **Infrastructure and Education**

20. The department welcomes the NPD's requirement that community infrastructure should match demand and be delivered in a timely fashion.
21. As the site for the secondary school is now confirmed, it is suggested that the NDP includes a specific reference to the project within the Delivering Infrastructure section (3.9) and supports its delivery.
22. Although the school will benefit communities outside of the Parish, a reference to the project should also be included at section 9.2.2 of the NDP and associated policy LW3.

### **Conclusion**

23. I hope the above comments are helpful in shaping the Pre-submission draft NDP, with specific regard to the provision of a secondary school in the Parish, now that the site for the project has been confirmed. Further discussions as to how the NDP can accommodate the project whilst maintaining other requirements relating to the settlement gap and key views are welcomed.
24. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries regarding this response. DfE looks forward to working with Cornwall Council and the NDP Group to aid in the preparation of the NDP.

Yours faithfully,

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Regional Planning Lead

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## **Annex A – Site Location Plan**

