

Potential themes for 'Housing and open space' Focus Group

For discussion at FG meeting 10th January 2019

1 Overall perspective towards large new developments on the periphery of Perranporth and Goonhavern, in the context of the need for more Affordable Housing for local residents

There is good evidence from the 2013 Community Plan and the shows of hands at the November public meetings, among other sources, that the community is strongly in favour of *restricting* as much as possible new large housing developments around our main villages, rather than encouraging *more development* to increase the number of affordable homes provided for those of the HomeChoice register. It makes sense to double-check this with a question in the questionnaire to be produced around Easter 2019.

2 Settlement boundaries

An NDP can define settlement boundaries around main villages so that outside of those boundaries, any new housing proposals would only be approved as 'Rural Exception Sites' (see following). Within those boundaries, there would be a presumption in favour of infilling and rounding-off. For this reason, we have been advised not to define settlement boundaries around dispersed clusters of houses in the open countryside.

3 Developments outside settlement boundaries become 'Rural Exception Sites' with the requirement to make (at least) 50% affordable housing provision

This is covered by policy 9 of the Cornwall Local Plan (also known as Local Plan – Strategic Policies, since it is not the only Local Plan document. Abbreviated here as LP-SP). St Agnes NDP and many others carry forward this policy into their NDP. Importantly, policy 9 refers to small scale sites, with 'small' relative to the scale and character of the existing settlement – although this is not explicit in the policy itself. The Affordable Housing (AH) team of CC are heavily involved in negotiations over AH provision on new developments. We are planning to meet up with the AH team member who deals with this area, to follow up various questions raised during the November meetings and to clarify other issues.

4 Housing for Specific Needs

The Cornwall LP-SP contains a policy 13 (unnumbered para 8) for the provision of 25% of dwellings as accessible homes on sites larger than 10. This doesn't always appear to be being implemented in practice and it is not clear why – possibly on grounds of viability. A policy in the St Agnes submitted NDP refers to (1) *accessible housing* for the elderly (as in Building Regulations Approved Document M4 - Category) and (2) housing for the *disabled*. It is not clear whether the policy requires that these should all be Affordable Housing. These issues remain to be developed.

5 Self Build and Custom Build

In many parishes, there is considerable interest in self and custom-build. One of the key issues is the difficulty in making available suitable sites at a reasonable cost. The questionnaire could usefully survey the level of interest in self and custom building in the parish.

6 Principal Residence/'Second Homes' policy

A typical policy is: "All new open market housing, excluding replacement dwellings, will only be supported where there is a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a Principal Residence." This policy would also be expected to curtail the use of new dwellings for holiday rentals, apart from short-term use in the summer period. Such a policy could, if the community decided, be adopted for Perranporth but not the parts of the parish lying further inland. For the policy to be accepted by the Examiner, we would need to provide sufficient justification for the policy in objective terms.

(Background information: last month the Examiner for the St Agnes NDP asked for ‘additional existing evidence, specific to the Neighbourhood Plan Area to support this policy’. This illustrates the importance of objective justification for a policy.)

7 Village Character

It may be possible to give more protection to the specific character of selected small villages and hamlets, and possibly selected parts of Perranporth and Goonhavern, by carrying out a ‘Village Character Assessment’ and developing an associated policy. Various parishes have employed an architect to prepare these VCAs. Before doing this, it would be helpful to assess in some way the potential benefit to be gained from such assessments in parts of the parish.

8 Protection of green wedges between villages, the main example currently being that between Perranporth and Bolingey

An issue raised during early consultations. Preliminary feedback from CC suggest this may be difficult but the aim is to explore possibilities before including this notion in the forthcoming questionnaire. A Village Character Assessment might assist in developing an objective rationale for such a policy

9 Infill in small hamlets and other clusters of houses

The LP-SP already includes a policy for infill, but there may be scope for refining this, particularly in terms of settlements within which this would apply and where it would *not* - particularly small clusters of houses in the more rural parts of the parish.

10 Open Space (OS)

The term ‘open space’ refers to “land in some form of public ownership that is regularly available for recreational or sporting use by the community, and also includes cemeteries & churchyards.” It ranges from small areas such as equipped children’s play areas, through sports pitches and allotments, to the beach in Perran and large natural green spaces that are open to the public. (Thus there is overlap with sites of interest to the Environment and Heritage group.) An assessment of OS in Perranporth was carried out by Cornwall Council in November 2016, fortunately. (Goonhavern was not included since it fell below the 1000 dwelling threshold adopted county-wide; an assessment could be commissioned for around £600.) Policy 13(2) of the LP-SP calls for OS provision on new housing sites according to local need. OS assessments have been used during negotiations with developers of large sites to achieve OS provision on-site, combined with financial payments for offsite provision or maintenance of existing facilities. In summary, the potential benefits of further work on this topic and the inclusion of a policy in our NDP are unclear at the moment.