



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

**Defence  
Infrastructure  
Organisation**

**Development Brief for  
St Eval Cornwall**

October 2011

**ST EVAL**



**PARISH COUNCIL**



## Section 1 Background and Objectives

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Development Brief has been prepared by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) in conjunction with St Eval Parish Council, local residents' association the St Eval Area Community Action Forum (SEACAF CIC) and other stakeholders for part of the site of RAF St Eval which is located 4 miles north of Newquay Airport in North Cornwall. It is intended to provide guidance on the future use of the site, to ensure that a high quality and sustainable redevelopment is achieved that will be sympathetic to the rural location and special landscape character whilst retaining the important community hub and local facilities. The proposed additional residential development and some local employment opportunities at St Eval will help to create a more self-contained and sustainable settlement; and support the continuation of the existing facilities which are very much valued by the local community.

### Purpose and Scope

- 1.2 This Brief is published both as a material consideration for use in the determination of any planning application that may be submitted to re-use and develop the site; and also to pave the way for the intended St Eval Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO). The main purpose of the Brief is to explain the principles and development parameters that future proposals for the site should adhere to in order to achieve an integrated, high quality and well designed development that reflects the wishes of the local community.
- 1.3 During the preparation of the Brief, DIO has liaised and consulted with the Parish Council, SEACAF CIC, Cornwall Council, the local community and other stakeholders whose views have been sought and taken into account in the Brief's preparation.

### Objectives

- 1.4 The *primary objective* is to secure the future of the existing community facilities in a suitable alternative location on the applicable land to ensure their continued availability for the local community.
- 1.5 Additional objectives, including those associated with the proposed new build residential development, are as follows;
- Sustainable development: to produce a thoughtful and land efficient development
  - Distinct Identity: to use energy efficiency as well as aspects of the local character within the design, creating a high quality development with an identifiable character and attractive public open space
  - Sustainable links: to encourage walking and cycling throughout the site and to the surrounding services and facilities by creating strong connections to existing routes and footpaths.
  - Enhancing local amenities: to provide a long-term community hub with improved public open space for the benefit of local residents.
- 1.6 The remainder of this document sets out the site context and considerations, the wider planning policy context as well as the future development requirements.

## Section 2 Site Context

### Site description and context

- 2.1 The village of St Eval is located between the larger settlements of Newquay and Padstow, with Padstow being approximately 4 miles northeast of the site and Newquay approximately 8 miles to the southwest.

RAF St Eval currently comprises a Defence Equipment and Support (DE & S) aerial field and a complex of former and current Service Family Accommodation (SFA) properties with an associated community centre. The US-Navy (USN) sports hall, church, child development and youth centre were handed over to the RAF following their withdrawal from the UK/US Joint Maritime Facility at RAF St Mawgan.

Following the sale of the airfield at RAF St Mawgan to Cornwall Council in December 2008 and the consequent reduction in RAF and USN personnel residing at St Eval, 39.47 hectares (97.49 acres) of land, buildings and community centre are to be sold.

The site is predominantly grassland with a number of plantations, gorse scrub and MOD buildings and hard standings.



### Site History

- 2.2 RAF St Eval was constructed in the late 1930's and became an important coastal command airfield during the Second World War. A small group of houses and a pub - together known as St Eval Churchtown - was demolished and a new village was built on the east side of the base providing married accommodation for the RAF.

- 2.3 RAF St Eval was a strategic airbase performing a number of vital roles, including anti-submarine patrols, reconnaissance missions and meteorological flights. The base continued to be used for maritime patrols until its closure in 1959, with the existing squadrons moving to nearby RAF St Mawgan. Today much of the basic structure still exists but many of the buildings have gone. The core of the remaining base is currently a communication station.



### Planning History

- 2.4 The planning history for the site is attached at Appendix A. Planning permission for the change of use of the former Child Development Centre to a shop/community centre has recently been granted. No other extant planning consents exist for the site.

### Ownership and leases

- 2.5 The site is in the freehold ownership of the Secretary of State for Defence. The following leases/licences have been granted or are currently being negotiated over parts of the site;
- Lease of the former NAAFI shop for use as a Post Office and general store expiring on the 9 December 2011.
  - Grazing licence for the former airfield expiring on the 31 December 2011.
  - Tenancy at Will of the Child Development Centre expected to be replaced by a lease once the Development Brief for the site is approved.
  - Lease of the Preschool building for a term of 4 years commencing on the 1 September 2011 is currently under negotiation.
  - Lease (completion imminent) of room 1 in community centre for use as a hairdressers and expiring on the 31 December 2011

- 3.1 The development of St Eval will be guided by national and regional planning guidance where and if applicable, the Development Plan and other relevant policy guidance including the following;
- National; specifically Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing, Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation.
  - Regional; the South West Regional Spatial Strategy
  - The Development Plan which comprises of the saved policies of the Cornwall Structure Plan 2004, the North Cornwall Local Plan 1999 saved policies and the emerging Cornwall Local Development Framework specifically the Core Strategy.

#### The current planning policy position

##### Regional Spatial Strategies

- 3.2 The Coalition Governments intention was to revoke Regional Strategies with immediate effect on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010, with the legal process for doing so forming part of the Localism Bill. Following various legal challenges, the Regional Strategies still form part of the planning system and are a material consideration until the anticipated adoption of the Localism Bill in late 2011.

##### The Development Plan

##### Cornwall Structure Plan 2004 – saved policies

- 3.3 Policies 1 to 28 of the Cornwall Structure Plan 2004 have been saved and are therefore still relevant in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.4 Policy 1: Principles for Sustainable Development requires development to bring about long term and sustainable improvement to Cornwall's economic, social and environmental circumstances without harming future opportunity. Development should be compatible with the regeneration of villages in meeting the needs of their population and surrounding area as well as providing access for all sectors of the community to well paid and rewarding employment, satisfactory housing and adequate services and facilities.
- 3.5 Policy 2: Character Areas, Design and Environmental Protection requires development to respect the local character whilst contributing positively to the townscape and landscape character through siting, design, use of local materials and landscaping.
- 3.6 Policy 16: Overall distribution of development states that in rural areas, the emphasis is on meeting development needs arising from the existing population and the diversification of the economy, having full regard to local character.
- 3.7 Policy 26: Rural areas states that development should support the continued social and economic viability of rural areas. Particular consideration should be given to the need to locate development to serve a local community or catchment where it can most effectively do so. This should be in or adjacent to existing settlements and should reflect opportunities for shared or joint use of services and facilities with scope to improve public transport.

##### North Cornwall Local Plan 1999 – saved policies

- 3.8 It is considered that the following saved policies of the North Cornwall Local Plan 2009 are relevant to the development of the site;

- DVS4: The Design and Layout of Housing Schemes
- ENV1: Protecting the Countryside and Landscape Character
- HSG2: Development in Minor Villages
- HSG3: Intensification of Residential Use
- SAF5: Village and Neighbourhood Shops
- SAF6: Protection of Open Space
- SAF7: Access to the Countryside
- SAF11: Other Community Facilities

### Cornwall Local Development Framework

- 3.9 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has led to a fundamental reform of the Development Plan System. Local Development Framework's (LDF's) have replaced the former system of local plans and structure plans. The Coalition Government has confirmed that the requirement for local authorities to produce an LDF-style document will continue.
- 3.10 An LDF will be made up of a number of Local Development Documents (LDD's) some of which will have Development Plan status and will be known as Development Plan Documents (DPD's) and others such as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) will replace what is currently referred to as a SPG.
- 3.11 The LDF will set out the Council's policies for meeting the community's economic, environmental and social aims for the future where this effects the development and use of the land.
- 3.12 Work on a new Development Plan for the whole of Cornwall is progressing in the form of a Core Strategy, which when adopted will set out the broad distribution of development, guide planning decisions, and manage change in Cornwall over the next 20 years. It will sit alongside other plans that Cornwall Council and its partners have prepared or are currently preparing. These include the Sustainable Community Strategy (Future Cornwall), Local Transport Plan (LTP3 Connecting Cornwall: 2030), Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Green Infrastructure Plan as well as those for education, health and social inclusion.
- 3.13 The Council is currently engaged in producing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for Cornwall. This work will provide information relating to the infrastructure required to serve new development in Cornwall and inform the investment plans of the providers. The work will also inform the development of the first Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will enable the collection of contributions to deal with the infrastructure requirements of Cornwall.

### The current planning position

- 3.14 It should be noted that due to the current planning system undergoing considerable changes, the policy basis for any subsequent planning application for this site is in a state of flux. It is therefore assumed that due to timings, the planning application will be considered in light of the emerging and newly adopted planning policy and legislation including the Localism Bill and the Coalition Governments publicised intentions. The Governments emerging mantra is to support sustainable development that is also supported by the community. This is particularly relevant where proposals would previously have been considered as a departure from planning policy and would have been considered as a rural exceptions site.

## **Section 4 Site Analysis and Constraints/Opportunities**

### Topography

- 4.1 The site is flat and is 100m above sea level. The substrate is a mixture of sandstone, siltstone and mudstone.

### Ground conditions/land contamination

- 4.2 The future end use of the site is not yet confirmed however it is anticipated that any new build development will be for mixed/residential purposes, following the adoption of this brief. Following an initial Land Quality Assessment (LQA), undertaken by Grontmij Limited on behalf of DIO, the site is considered to be suitable for a sensitive end-use (residential) purpose, subject to Local Planning Authority approval and consideration of the findings from the pending Threat Assessment for unexploded ordnance, together with appropriate investigation and dealing with any anticipated localised contamination.
- 4.3 Based upon information obtained and reviewed as part of this LQA, widespread contamination across the eastern area of the site is considered unlikely as a result of the historical or current use of the site. Widespread contamination across the western area of the site is also considered unlikely although localised areas of contamination from historic sources are anticipated.

### Drainage and Utilities

- 4.4 Please see the summary of consultee responses (Appendix B).

### Landscape

- 4.5 The site is not subject to any national or countywide landscape designations. It is located within the 'Trevose Head and Coastal Plateau' Landscape Character Area which is characterised by a low lying and gently rolling agricultural landscape open to the winds from the sea; and a contrasting coastline of dramatic rock features, headland coves and sand dunes. To the south of the site the landscape is within a designated Area of Great Landscape Value and the coast to the northwest is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### Transport and Accessibility

- 4.6 St Eval is accessed via 'B' class roads off the A39 which connects to the A30 main through route in Cornwall. There are public rights of way on the edge of the site to the southeast near to the existing community facilities; and also across the road to the south of the site. The layout of future development should provide linkages into these.
- 4.7 A Transport Assessment would be required to be submitted with a planning application which should include the following elements:
- (a) previous traffic pattern, when the site was managed by MoD, if available;
  - (b) the current situation and;
  - (c) the predicted traffic pattern if the proposed development proceeds.

Some works/improvements may be necessary to the main road through the village to ease the increase in cross movements by pedestrians/cyclists which are likely to result from new residential development on both sides of the road.

A travel plan would be required to show how non car modes would be promoted.

## Ecology and Trees

- 4.8 A Phase 1 Habitat and Protected Species Survey has been carried out by the Environment Team of DIO. In summary it concludes that the land to the east of the main road that divides the site has low potential value for biodiversity with the exception of the medium to high potential for bats in the buildings and a notable hedgerow. The land to the west of the main road contains a significant amount of biodiversity. It includes areas of semi improved grassland (in places sufficient to qualify as the BAP priority habitat of lowland meadow) and a notable hedgerow.
- 4.9 An Ecological Impact Assessment will be required to support any future planning applications and this survey should be used in conjunction with the existing survey data that exists to assess impacts and mitigation against the design of the development when known.
- 4.10 The small area of broadleaved woodland to the south of the American buildings (which may be a suitable habitat for wildlife) and the hedgerow that runs along the southern boundary of the site should be retained if possible in any future development.

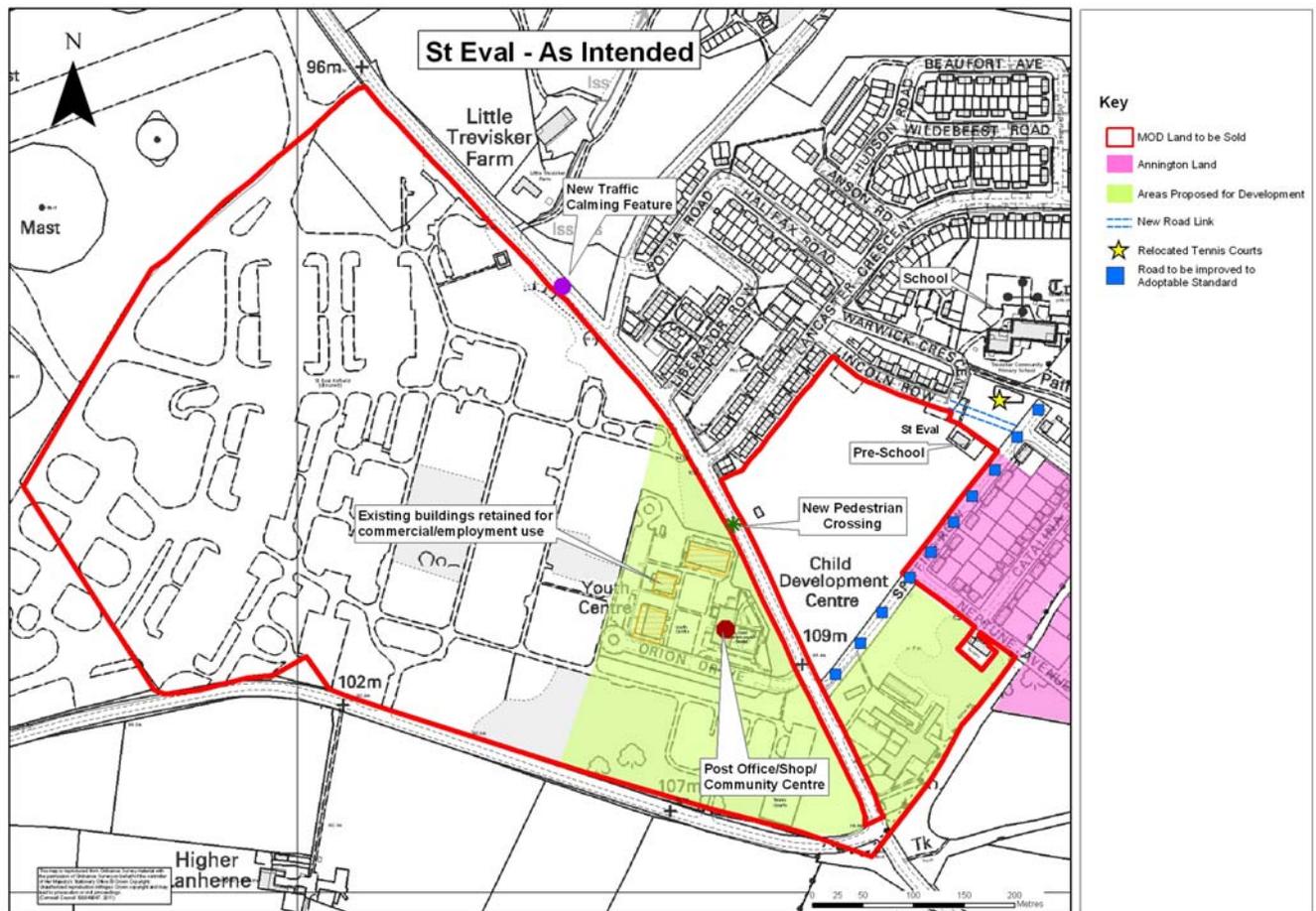
## Archaeology

- 4.11 'Trevisker Round' on site of Trevisker School is Scheduled Ancient Monument. For further context please refer to the submission of the Cornwall Council Archaeologist at Appendix B.

## **Section 5 Future Development Requirements**

### Areas suitable for redevelopment

- 5.1 The areas shown in green on the location plan below highlight the proposed areas for residential/mixed development.
- 5.2 The existing community facilities are currently located on the eastern side of the main road that runs through St Eval. These buildings are in a poor structural condition and elements of asbestos are present. The site abuts previous Service Family Accommodation (shown in pink) which is now in the ownership of Annington Homes.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the existing community facilities are demolished and the site redeveloped for approximately 60 dwellings. The site extends to 2.314 hectares and this equates to an approximate density of 35 dwellings per hectare.



- 5.4 The larger area shown in green on the plan above (across the road from the existing community facilities) includes the cluster of rendered buildings known as the “American buildings”. This cluster consists of a church, sports hall and a child development and youth centre (known as the ‘CDC’) previously utilised by the US Navy. These buildings are now empty however it is anticipated that the community facilities currently located on the smaller eastern parcel of the site will relocate into the child development and youth centre in the early winter of 2011. The remaining buildings of this cluster should be used for commercial/employment uses.
- 5.5 The open area to the south of the American buildings is considered suitable for additional residential accommodation of approximately 40 dwellings. This area is approximately 3 hectares and would be low density to allow for the retention of the small woodland and existing hedgerows which offer some shelter from the elements. In the interests of achieving a good quality scheme, it is preferred that both sides of the road should be developed together.
- 5.6 The existing tennis court would need to be relocated and this could be accommodated on the adjacent village open space near the school. The village open space itself, located to the northeast of the main road off Spitfire Row, is not identified for any proposed development and should be retained as open space.
- 5.7 The large area of white land shown on the above plan to the west of the American buildings is not identified at this stage for redevelopment. The proposed development area shown in green focuses on the re-use and redevelopment of existing areas as a priority to provide a concentration of development close to the heart of the village. Although officially classified as brownfield, the land to the west of the American buildings is considered to have a higher community value currently as open land; however future work on the Neighbourhood

Development Order is likely to include a more detailed assessment of its future role for the community needs.

#### Layout of development

- 5.8 It is envisaged that the additional residential development abutting the main road through the village will create a strong road frontage and therefore an emerging sense of place for those entering the locality. The redevelopment of the area on the eastern side of the road allows for an opportunity to reinforce the edge of the village open space allowing for additional natural surveillance. The proposed new development will need to be sensitive to existing residential properties and the wider rural landscape. It should aim to achieve an exemplary standard in sustainability terms, for example achieving at least level 4 Code for Sustainable Homes.

#### Buildings to be retained

- 5.9 It is acknowledged that the poor quality buildings on the smaller eastern parcel of land will be demolished to allow for suitable redevelopment. It is considered that the American buildings are worthy of retention due to their structural condition and appearance. Their general re-use is considered the most sustainable option and provides an ongoing opportunity for community facilities and potential small-scale employment uses.

#### The remainder of the site

- 5.10 The west area of the site is not identified as being suitable for built development at this stage; however it is considered that this land can be utilised to benefit the local community. Following the public consultation event at the recent village fete, it was highlighted that the local community lacked formal allotments. It is considered that this land provides an opportunity for such a facility to be provided, perhaps along the western boundary abutting the American buildings.
- 5.11 The footpath and bridlepath network in the locality could benefit from being strengthened as there are limited linkages at present, and circular routes are unavailable. It is considered that this land could be utilised to create additional opportunities. These additional opportunities should also link to the areas to be developed to encourage new and existing residents to use the network.

#### Developer contributions

- 5.12 As part of any future development at this site it is to be anticipated that a developer would be expected to contribute to ensuring the wider sustainability of the settlement. In addition to the priority need to secure the community facilities and village shop in the CDC building over the longer term (as referred to above), contributions are likely to be requested towards *inter alia* education, the provision of an element of affordable housing, open space maintenance, possible highways improvements and the upgrade/replacement of the existing village changing room facilities. Such contributions are likely to be sought by way of a legal agreement under Section 106 of the relevant planning acts (s106) and/or through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

## **Section 6 Implementation**

- 6.1 This development brief was adopted by Cornwall Council on (*date t.b.c.*) as a material consideration to provide the principles of any future planning applications at St Eval.

- 6.2 The key requirement to ensure the long term future of community facilities will be achieved by the requirement that the location of the facilities in the Child Development Centre is secured. The Tenancy at Will of this building is expected to be replaced by a lease once the Development Brief is approved.