

## **Allocating Sites in your NDP 3: Site Allocation Policies**

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## Introduction

'Allocating Sites in your NDP 3: Site Allocation Policies' is the last of three sets of guidance on allocating sites for future development in a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This guidance provides an overview of what to consider when forming your site allocation policies.

To have reached this stage, you will have already compiled a strong evidence base to support the case for allocating land for development (informed by the second guidance note in this series 'Allocating Sites in your NDP 2: A Methodology for Site Selection'). This guidance note 3 now looks towards finalising the site allocation work, and should be read in conjunction with guidance provided by Cornwall Council on writing policies<sup>1</sup>.

An aspect repeated throughout this series of guidance is to remember, **that a NDP is your community's opportunity to set out how and where future development should take place, rather than leaving this to developers and other parties to determine. This is the most crucial stage to remember this - now you know what the community's aspirations are and have your evidence base, it's up to you to communicate these through your policies.**

An example Site Allocation Policy is presented at the end of this guidance.

## What is Site Allocation Policy?

Having determined which sites you want to include in your NDP, you should now think about forming a Site Allocation Policy. Policy content is crucial in communicating which sites should be developed in future and the development that should take place on them. It is the actual policies within your NDP that will be implemented - any content, outside of the policies, is merely supporting and explanatory information to provide context.

NDPs usually contain different types of policies, including:

- **General policies** will usually be applied across the whole plan area and are generally quite simple or generic in scope. They could deal with such issues such as design, landscape impact or sustainability. They would not deal with a site specific proposal;
- **Criteria based policies** set criteria that development must meet. A good example of this would be setting out standards for a particular issue, such as ensuring that affordable housing is provided. The plan must be clear as to whether the criteria are 'either or', or whether they must all be met to make the development suitable; and
- **Site specific/site allocation policies**, which apply to a specific area of land or a site. They will usually set out the conditions for how a specific piece of land will be used or treated. This could range from allocating local open space to setting out standards and mix of uses for a particular site. Where your plan will impact on how specific land is used, we would always advise you to gain the input of landowners at an early stage, continuing their engagement throughout the NDP process.

## Format of a Site Allocation Policy

Guidance on how policies should be written is given within Cornwall Council's 'Writing Policies' guidance<sup>2</sup>. You should refer to it to help you write these and other policies, as it sets out important

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/neighbourhood-planning-toolkit/stage-2c-writing-the-polices/>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/11408774/Writing-Policies-guide-note-March-15.pdf>

policy writing tips, including what policies can and can't achieve; how they should be formatted; the type of language to use etc. In addition to these general tips, when writing a Site Allocation Policy, it is imperative that a map of the site area is included and can be clearly understood – ideally, for ease of reference, within the relevant policy wording section.

## Aspects to Consider/Include

In arriving at this stage you will have gathered a huge amount of evidence. This evidence will likely consist of both positive and negative aspects relating to the site in question. The policy you develop will need to try to enhance the positives whilst improving or mitigating the negatives.

## The Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

The SA, which you will have carried out as stage 2, is a key source of information at the policy writing stage. The SA has appraised the sites in terms of how future development may impact the environment, economy and society. In doing so, positive and negative impacts of proposals will have been considered, together with proposed mitigation measures and considerations<sup>3</sup>.

You should use this information to help form your policy. Once your policy has been completed, a further iteration of your SA<sup>4</sup> is recommended taking the policy requirements into consideration (the SA is an ongoing tool to assess the impacts of your proposals) - this will stand you in good stead should a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) be required as the environmental element of the SA will help satisfy this requirement.

## Future Uses and Quantity of Development

You will need to consider what types of development will be permitted on each site, and also an estimate of quantity. Avoid giving specific quantities as at this stage, as these may be difficult to establish. When setting out what uses are encouraged, it is good practice to include a reference to Use Class (see Appendix 1).

## Infrastructure

When setting out future usages, don't forget to consider what infrastructure may be required. This could include, for instance, asking the following questions of potential sites:

- Are better pedestrian/cycling links required between the site and existing facilities?
- Is there a particular open space need for the site (or could a nearby space be improved as part of the development)?
- Are there existing water ways that should be integrated into the scheme design in a particular way (i.e. for drainage and/or as open space)
- Is there a particular location within the site where Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems could be developed?

You may have answered these questions when collecting your site allocations evidence. If so, you just need to use this evidence to inform the writing of your policies.

## Wider Impacts

Through your SA you will have established any risks to the wider environment (e.g. this could be impacts on flooding in the wider area, impact of development on the existing character of the

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 5, 'Allocating Sites in your NDP 2: A Methodology for Site Selection'.

<sup>4</sup> See Step 7, 'Allocating Sites in your NDP 2: A Methodology for Site Selection'.

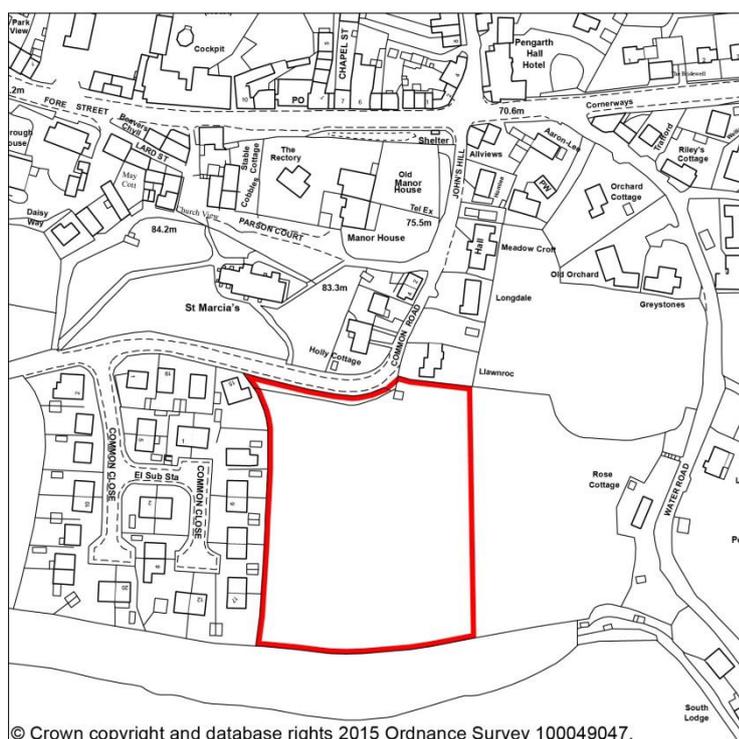
settlement). Ways to mitigate any negative impacts should be specifically set out at this stage, within the wording and supporting text for each policy.

### **Design**

In addition to allocating land for certain types of development, you could also set out design standards that you would like to apply to future development for each site.

## Example Site Allocation Policy

### Map 1: Land South of Common Road and behind Common Close



### Policy 7 - Land south of Common Road and behind Common Close

Land amounting to 1.5 hectares, as shown on Map 1, is allocated for residential development of approximately 35 dwellings. Development will be permitted where the development would provide the following:

1. Provision of affordable housing in line with current standards set out in the development plan for Cornwall;
2. Provision of safe vehicular and pedestrian and cycle access connecting the site to Common Road;
3. Preserve and enhance the Medieval Fountain that adjoins the site;
4. Design proposals should reflect the local setting and incorporate traditional materials;
5. Recreational provision on, or in the vicinity of the allocated site. This provision may consist of some combination of informal open space and pedestrian routes which link to green space and/or the wider footpath network;
6. A contribution to green space provision in accordance with the adopted standards of the development plan or management in the wider area within which the site is located.
7. Retention of the public right of way that passes through the southern part of the site, aiming to integrate this successfully into the development to enable its safe use;
8. Incorporation of sustainable drainage measures demonstrating how they will integrate with the design of the development and contribute to the amenity and biodiversity of the development. This should include details of future management and maintenance of the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS).

## Appendix 1: Planning Use Classes

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. This Order is periodically amended, the most recent amendment comprising The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2015.

The following list gives an indication of the types of use which may fall within each use class.

**A1 Shops** - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, funeral directors and internet cafes.

**A2 Financial and professional services** - Financial services such as banks and building societies, professional services (other than health and medical services) and including estate and employment agencies. It does not include betting offices or pay day loan shops - these are now classed as "sui generis" uses (see below).

**A3 Restaurants and cafés** - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.

**A4 Drinking establishments** - Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments (but not night clubs).

**A5 Hot food takeaways** - For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

**B1 Business** - Offices (other than those that fall within A2), research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area.

**B2 General industrial** - Use for industrial process other than one falling within class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste).

**B8 Storage or distribution** - This class includes open air storage.

**C1 Hotels** - Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided (excludes hostels).

**C2 Residential institutions** - Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres.

**C2A Secure Residential Institution** - Use for a provision of secure residential accommodation, including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.

**C3 Dwellinghouses** - this class is formed of 3 parts:

- C3(a) covers use by a single person or a family (a couple whether married or not, a person related to one another with members of the family of one of the couple to be treated as members of the family of the other), an employer and certain domestic employees (such as

an au pair, nanny, nurse, governess, servant, chauffeur, gardener, secretary and personal assistant), a carer and the person receiving the care and a foster parent and foster child.

- C3(b): up to six people living together as a single household and receiving care e.g. supported housing schemes such as those for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems.
- C3(c) allows for groups of people (up to six) living together as a single household. This allows for those groupings that do not fall within the C4 HMO definition, but which fell within the previous C3 use class, to be provided for i.e. a small religious community may fall into this section as could a homeowner who is living with a lodger.

**C4 Houses in multiple occupation** - small shared houses occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals, as their only or main residence, who share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom.

**D1 Non-residential institutions** - Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres.

**D2 Assembly and leisure** - Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreations (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

**Sui Generis** - Certain uses do not fall within any use class and are considered 'sui generis'. Such uses include: betting offices/shops, pay day loan shops, theatres, houses in multiple occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, launderettes, taxi businesses, amusement centres and casinos