

# Land at The Shires, Tregarrick Farm, Roche

## Joint Development Brief

### 1. Introduction

Roche village, in Mid-Cornwall is situated approximately 1 mile south of the A 30, 6 miles from St Austell and 7 miles from Bodmin at an altitude of approximately 190 metres above sea-level. The village has a population of around 2,500 people.

The site, the subject of this development brief, is situated at the southeastern edge of the village between Tregarrick Road and Bugle Road.

This development brief has been prepared jointly by the prospective developers and the Local Planning Authority following preliminary consultation with other statutory bodies, the local Ward Councillor, Parish Council, The Devon and Cornwall Housing Association and other interested parties.

The main objectives of this development brief are to catalogue and evaluate the main issues to be considered prior to the submission of formal planning applications.

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### 2. Background

#### **(a) Site Location**

The site is located to the south-east of Roche village adjoining the new residential development at Tregarrick Road, Horseshoe Close and Duke's Court.

#### **(b) Site Description**

The site comprises farmland and a complex of farm buildings known as Tregarrick Farm. It is formed by 3 enclosures and areas currently occupied by redundant farm buildings and yards, and with frontages to Fore Street, Tregarrick Farmhouse, a garage workshop and a derelict cottage. The main development site has an area of approximately 3.65 ha. and Tregarrick Farmstead site has an area of approximately 0.65 ha. In the main the enclosures are bounded by Cornish hedges with substantial live hedge growth. More recently constructed boundaries are formed with stockproof fences. The fields are used for grazing. Apart from the Tregarrick Farmhouse area the land has a gradient downwards to the north and east of approximately 5%. Access can be gained to the site at Tregarrick Road, Fore Street and Bugle Road.

#### **(c) Village Access and Transport**

**Rail** - a railway station, on the Branch Par- Newquay line is located approximately 1 mile from the site at Victoria. Services are currently limited to a 2 hourly service in the mornings and an evening service.

**Bus services** - bus services to and from the village connect to St. Austell, Newquay, Truro, Bodmin, St. Columb and nearby villages. The service to and from St. Austell is approximately hourly.

**Road System** - a considerable volume of traffic passes through the centre of Roche. Heavy vehicles serving the clay industry and associated industries pass through Roche to reach the A30. High sided vehicles using the A30 Trunk Road, unable to pass below the low railway bridge at the Goss moor are diverted through Roche. Drivers travelling to and from St. Austell and the Eden Project travelling to and from the A30, St Columb Major and Newquay often choose to pass through Roche.

#### **(d) Earlier Phases**

The proposed development site adjoins earlier phases, the latest of which is nearing completion. The earlier phases (including Mayfield Drive and Primrose Close) incorporate:

- An area of Public Open Space at Mayfield Drive - this includes a large area of natural open ground and a pond.
- A large area of open space off Tregarrick Road and Duke's Court - this is nearing completion and will include children's play equipment in accordance with Restormel Borough Council requirements.
- General housing, mainly low density, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses as well as detached and semi-detached split level dwellings and bungalows.
- 6 affordable houses sold to local people at a discounted priced in accordance with the terms of a Section 106 Agreement.

Generally the dwellings have been constructed with rendered walls, with either marble chipping or painted float finish, and panels of Cornish slate stonework. Apart from 14 cottages, which have natural slate roofs, the dwellings have brown

interlocking concrete tiles as roof coverings. The entrance to the earlier phases is by a single vehicular access (Tregarrick Road) with two pedestrian access links to Tremodrett Road.

### 3. Planning Policies

The adopted Cornwall Structure Plan and the Restormel Borough Local Plan comprise the 'development plan' for the site and set out the policy context for this development brief. The Local Plan specifically allocates land off Fore Street/Bugle Road for housing. Approximately 140 dwellings have been suggested with 40 of them being affordable. Currently 52 dwellings have been built of which 6 are affordable. The Plan sets out a range of criteria in relation to this proposed development, including the following key criteria:

- access via a through road or 2 independent accesses.
- 25 dwellings per hectare (dph) average density across the site.
- No more than 70 dwellings before 2006.
- Provision of a village green, school field, school extension and footpath before 70 dwellings.
- 40 affordable units.

Annex A to this brief includes a summary of the specific Local Plan policies relevant to this development brief. Paragraph 40.11 in the Local Plan requires a development brief to be prepared to deal with the more detailed aspects of phasing, access, limitations on housing numbers, layout, house types, landscaping, open spaces and use of existing buildings. Regard also needs to be had to recent Government guidance that provides a more up-to-date context for some aspects of the development brief as compared to policies in the adopted Local Plan. For example, PPG3 seeks more sustainable forms of housing development through the more efficient use of land (30-50 dph), more integrated design solutions and reducing the need for car travel. The developer will be required to take account of the latest guidance in formulating proposals for the site.

### 4. Site Analysis: Constraints and Opportunities

#### *(a) Transport and Movement*

**Tregarrick Road** - the first section of this road, between its junctions with Fore Street and Springfield Way, was originally designed to take a large volume of traffic and be part of a major through route to Bugle Road. However, design guidance has changed and wide through routes, which will allow high vehicle speeds through residential developments, are not now acceptable. The road currently serves approximately 150 dwellings. The Highway Authority has indicated that it would not like to see a significant increase in this number without the provision of an alternative access. The preferred solution is a link road through to Bugle Road but this needs to include measures to reduce vehicle speeds, avoid 'rat-running' and increase connectivity for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. It would be appropriate for Tregarrick Road be extended into the new development to serve only a limited amount of additional development, no more than 14 to 20 dwellings. The remainder of the development will require completion of the link through to Bugle Road. In relation to emergency vehicles, measures should be included to allow such vehicles full access to all sections of the development but collapsible/removable bollards should be installed to prevent inappropriate access to some areas by non-emergency vehicles.

**Fore Street at Tregarrick Farm** - an access lane exists to the north of Tregarrick Farmhouse. This lane currently serves the farm buildings, the rear access to the farmhouse and agricultural land. Visibility at the junction of this lane with Fore Street is restricted.

There is potential to utilise this point of access to serve the redevelopment of the farmstead and improve the quality of the current access. Should the buildings be replaced with new development set further back from the highway (see below), visibility would be substantially improved. This improved access would be a primary access to the development site for pedestrians but only of secondary importance for vehicles. The layout within the site would need to be designed to discourage its use for purposes other than the redevelopment of the farmstead area. The provision of Traffic Calming measures within Fore Street will need to be considered.

**Bugle Road** - an entrance off Bugle Road should be the primary access to serve the major part of the residential allocation that remains to be developed. Bugle Road currently accommodates relatively low volumes of vehicular traffic and there is good junction visibility at the southern end of the site. This would enable an appropriate access to the existing highway network at this point. Traffic calming measures within Bugle Road will be provided due to the proximity of the new entrance to the primary school and recreation areas.

**Primary School** - the school is currently accessed from Bugle Road. The development of the site will provide an opportunity to provide alternative vehicle and pedestrian access routes to the school. Link footpaths through the development can provide safe routes from other parts of the village to the school.

**Pedestrians and Cyclists** - an integrated system of footpaths/cycleways through the site, separated where possible from carriageways, and overlooked by dwellings, will be necessary to provide a safer and more pleasing environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Specifically, the development needs to include a footpath link between Tregarrick Road and Bugle Road. This link will provide pedestrian/cycle access between the village and Roche Rock. In the interests of public safety, a temporary footpath needs to be provided between Duke's Court and Bugle Road to provide safe pedestrian/cycle access during site construction.

### **(b) Landscape and Visual Analysis**

**Site Visibility** - The site is located on moderately sloping ground approaching the brow of a hill at its south-western corner. To the north the site is visible from Edgcombe Road, Tremodrett Road and parts of Chapel Road. To the north-east the site is visible from Broadlands and Tregonhay (approximately 750 metres from the site). To the east the site is visible from the narrow, little used, unclassified road between Tremodrett and Rosemellyn. (approximately 1,500 metres from the site). Generally the site is obscured from view from the highway because of the roadside Cornish and natural hedging. To the south-east the site is partly visible from the approach road from Bugle. However, much of the site is obscured from view due to a combination of the topography of the ground and Cornish hedging. Part of the site is visible from the south and from the base of Roche Rock. Existing buildings mainly screen the site from Fore Street to the west.

**Landscape** - The main part of the site is grassland in enclosures formed with Cornish hedges. There are few trees at the site. Most of those that do exist are over mature, decayed and damaged. Thorn hedging grows from the tops of the Cornish hedges. Brambles exist in the Cornish hedging and redundant areas of the site. Latterly installed boundaries are formed with stock proof fences. Areas to the north are developed with housing and areas to the east are grassland. Playing fields and scrubland, with ferns, gorse, dogwood and granite outcrops, dominated by Roche Rock, exist to the south with the clay industry beyond. Development of the site provides the opportunity to soften the eastern and southern boundaries of the site with gentle earth mounding and screen planting using indigenous trees and shrubs, incorporating granite boulders to the south boundary.

### **(c) Ecology**

**Hedging** - the existing hedges form a useful habitat for birds and other small wildlife and are to be retained wherever possible.

**Trees** - a small group of over-mature trees exist between the farm buildings at Tregarrick Farm and the open space provided in the earlier phase of the development. Because of its topography, the site is quite exposed to wind and driving rain. Careful species selection will therefore be necessary at more exposed areas of the development to ensure that any new planting prospers. The site's relative lack of existing trees provides an opportunity to increase tree cover and enhance the local landscape through carefully landscaped new development.

**Badgers** - there is no evidence of Badger setts or trails within or near the site. No specific badger protection measures should therefore be necessary.

**Bats and Owls** - a bat and owl survey has been carried out at the site of the redundant farm buildings at Tregarrick Farm by Cornwall Environmental Consultants Limited. There was no evidence of bats. There was evidence that a Barn Owl roosted at the site although there was no evidence of nesting owls. The provision of an appropriately sited owl nesting box may therefore be necessary as part of the development proposals.

### **(d) Historic Environment**

**Roche Rock** - Roche Rock and St. Michael's Chapel, a scheduled Ancient Monument lies approximately 170 metres south-east of the proposed Bugle Road access point to the site. It is set in a rugged landscape of granite and scrubland. Roche Rock is a distinctive craggy outcrop standing above the flat-lying Devonian slates that surround it. Although it is in close proximity to other fields of granite it has a uniqueness that makes it of particular geological interest. Built into the rock are the remains of 14<sup>th</sup> Century chapel and hermit's cell. The layout of the development needs to respect the setting to these features through the careful use of landscaping, layout and design. **Tregarrick Farm** - various issues must be taken into account when considering the re-development of Tregarrick Farm. The existing farmstead buildings are in a very poor state of repair. One section of a single storey building has already collapsed and is in a dangerous condition. Other slate roofs have been replaced with corrugated metal sheeting. Although many of the walls are structurally sound, others have large cracks. Many timbers are rotten and all roofs would need to be replaced. The conversion of these buildings would be relatively costly and conversion would be structurally difficult. Demolition of the buildings would provide an opportunity to provide a sensitively designed landmark building in this important part of the site, using the reclaimed materials. The preliminary view of the County Council and Borough Council is that the existing farmstead buildings may have some historic interest. They are not, however, statutorily recognised for their historic or architectural importance. An historic survey of the building will therefore need to be carried out to determine their importance and inform any decisions on retention, conversion or demolition. A Medieval Manor House existed in the vicinity of the site but its exact position and status is not known. An archaeological study, in accordance with PPG16, will need to be carried out to determine the archaeological importance of the site and the need for any preservation measures. There are potential benefits to the street scene of Fore Street by removing the existing farmhouse, nearby cottage, Churchtown garage and associated buildings, replacing them with a range of high quality buildings. The existing farmhouse is in a state of disrepair requiring major improvements to bring it to a good standard. Although much of the external walling is constructed in granite the upper front elevation is finished in non-descript rendering. The roof has, in the past, been re-covered with asbestos cement slates. The nearby cottage is derelict and would need to be the subject of major restoration works before it could be re-occupied. Churchtown Garage detracts seriously from the street scene. The building should be demolished and the business re-located.

Consideration will be given to the redevelopment of this area with new, high quality buildings with salvaged granite walls and natural slates roofs. Such redevelopment could significantly enhance the street scene in this area.

### **(e) Drainage**

**Surface Water Drainage** - the majority of the roof and surface water from private areas to the earlier development phases drains to soakaways. The roads and some of the roof water from these phases drain to a stream to the north of the site. This stream is a tributary of the Par River. A pond is located to the side of the stream just below the point of discharge of the main surface water sewer. The pond is accessible from Mayfield Drive.

Localised flooding occurs down stream during exceptional periods of wet weather near Tregonhay and at Tremodrett. The flooding at Tregonhay affects a minor road between Broadlanes and Carbis just south of Tregonhay Farm. The flooding at Tremodrett affects two separate minor roads and threatens Tremodrett Mill and a property known as Penvellyn. Below Tremodrett the stream passes through Criggan Moors. The Environment Agency advises that some form of attenuation must be provided to restrict flows to their current levels. The implementation of other flood prevention measures may be necessary. Modifications to the pond at Mayfield Drive to enable it to be used as an attenuation pond. Other measures such

as the provision of swales and soakaways are likely to be necessary. The developer should consult the Environment Agency to agree the appropriate means of draining the site.

**Foul Drainage** - sewage from Roche is disposed of at the Luxulyan Sewage Treatment Works.

Problems have arisen at the works due to the current volume of sewage. Interim works are currently being carried out to increase the capacity of the facility. More major improvement works are programmed to be carried out during 2003. The implementation of the development proposals will be subject to an agreement with South West Water.

A large diameter trunk sewer connecting Roche to Luxulyan Sewage Treatment Works was installed in the late 1970s/early 1980s. In the process of developing Mayfield Drive, Primrose Close and 'The Shires' scheme, existing sewers were upgraded and new sewers installed to accommodate future housing development at the proposed development site. South West Water advises that the sewer within Fore Street would be capable of receiving sewage from up to 25 units fronting or in close proximity to Fore Street. Provided that the new network of sewers is carefully designed no further upgrading should be necessary.

#### **(f) Education**

Roche County Primary School is situated next to the site and provides easily accessible primary education provision for new residents of the development. Currently there are 210 primary school children in attendance although the school has a maximum capacity of 240 pupils. It also incorporates a local play group (30 child capacity) and a Community Learning Centre (adult education/ IT training with a capacity for approximately 20 students). The nearest secondary education provision is at schools in St. Stephen and St. Austell. The new residential development will increase demands on local schools. Land has been identified between the existing school site and the development site to allow for the expansion of Roche Primary School. The developer must agree the following matters with the Local Education Authority (LEA):

- The appropriate formula to calculate the level of financial contributions to be made by the developer to the LEA to reflect the additional educational demands generated by the new development.
- The exact points and types of access to the school from the development site.

#### **(g) Medical Facilities**

The area is served by a General Practice Surgery at Tremodrett Road Roche but the existing surgery is too small to cater for the demands of the area. There is no space to enlarge the building on its present site and Tremodrett Road lacks adequate footways so making the existing site less than ideal. The Practice Manager has expressed a desire to relocate to a new site within Roche to enable a more accessible and better equipped facility to serve the local community. One option already considered is land adjacent to The Victory Hall in Victoria Road. Although the development of the Tregarrick Farm site does not justify the provision of additional medical facilities, the site does provide the potential to accommodate a relocated surgery and parking area on land just north of the school.

#### **(h) Other Existing Village Facilities**

Roche has a wide range of local services and facilities that underline its sustainability credentials for new development and which will provide new residents with easy access to a wide variety of everyday services and activities. In addition, most of these businesses and facilities would benefit considerably by the additional people housed within the new development. Existing facilities at Roche include the following:

- *Sports/social* - Roche Victory Hall and Social Club, Roche Football Social Club
- *Retail* - Post Office, bakers, butchers, video shop, Co-op Mini market, newsagents, greengrocers.
- *Food & drink* - Chinese takeaway, two public houses and fish and chip shop.
- *Services* - Launderette

## **5. Design Principles**

### **(a) Vision for the Development**

**The Existing Setting** - the older more central areas of the village have been built in a random manner with buildings of different scale. Early buildings were constructed mainly with granite and rendered walls with slate roofs. More modern buildings and extensions to original buildings have been peppered amongst the older ones, often in an insensitive manner. Later 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments have been constructed away from the centre with various layout forms and an array of building materials.

In nearly all circumstances these developments were constructed using designs and materials and construction techniques of their time with little regard to the design of the earlier buildings.

**The New development** – there is no clear design theme that runs through any part of the existing village to form a firm basis for the new development. It is therefore necessary for the new development to reflect the best traditions of the village, using granite and slate and render materials applied in a traditional manner. Where appropriate, traditional Cornish details should be used e.g. clipped verges and eaves to roof, as well as windows with a vertical emphasis. Sensitive urban design will be essential to achieve a locally appropriate, attractive and safe living environment for residents. Buildings of different scales should be grouped together in various ways to create varied and interesting street scenes. Landscaping will be of major importance in the creation of the village environment. Hard landscaping should include paving and walls of more traditional materials. Monotonous large areas of tarmac surfacing are to be avoided. Safe, interesting pedestrian and cycle routes need to be included to provide easy access between various parts of the development and to provide links to the amenities of the

village. These should be carefully integrated with the new buildings, open spaces and amenity areas. The developer is encouraged to use restrictive covenants with house sales preventing future unsightly ad-hoc alterations and additions.

**(b) Development Types and Disposition**

The site will comprise mainly housing but the redevelopment of Tregarrick Farm will provide the potential for some commercial uses. However, these should exclude general produce retail shops that would compete with existing village businesses. As mentioned above, there may also be scope for a relocated surgery north of the existing school. Demand for dwellings in the area covers a wide spectrum in relation to size, type and price. The proposed mix of housing should reflect this demand and aim to meet a wide cross-section of the market. House types should therefore be wide-ranging, from small terraced cottages to large detached houses and bungalows. The commercial element could incorporate flat/maisonette living accommodation.

The average density of the housing throughout the development should be in the range 30-50 dph, with a minimum of 30 dph, in accordance with advice in PPG3. Careful use of layout and density will enable these density stipulations to be met whilst respecting the site characteristics, adjacent development etc. It is envisaged that an average density of 34 dwellings per hectare will be achieved. On this basis approximately 146 further dwellings can be accommodated on the land available (including the re-developed Tregarrick Farm) The higher density parts of the site will be those closest to the existing development and Fore Street, with the lowest density areas being peripheral to the site. This will assist in softening the impact of development on the wider landscape and enable a more sensitive response to the setting of Roche rock, for example.

Due to the topography of the site it is necessary to limit the height of dwellings to 2½ storeys. Most dwellings are to be two storey although a proportion of single storey dwellings will be acceptable as it is recognised that there is a strong market demand for bungalows, especially in the retirement market. Moreover, single storey dwellings at the site's eastern and southern peripheries would assist in ameliorating the visual impact of new development along those boundaries where there is a danger that taller buildings would dominate the landscape. The design of adequate access arrangements to dwellings by disabled people is a Building Regulations requirement. Consideration will be given to providing some dwellings designed specifically for full use by disabled people. With regard to affordable housing, the Local Plan requires that the overall scheme (including Phases 1 and 2 which are now nearing completion) should provide 40 affordable dwellings. This is 28.6% of the total number of dwellings to be provided.

The number of dwellings being provided on this and earlier phases of The Shires Development now amounts to approximately 198 of which 52 have been built. Using the same proportion indicated in the Local Plan (28.6%) the overall scheme should provide 57 new affordable homes. 6 affordable dwellings have been provided in earlier phases, leaving 51 such dwellings to be provided on the remaining land.

34 of the affordable dwellings are to be built as early as is practicable, consistent with providing them on a scattered basis throughout the development. Of these 10 dwellings will be for sale at a controlled price to local people and 24 dwellings to be built for The Devon and Cornwall Housing Association on a letting and part ownership basis.

**(c) Open Space and Recreation**

The earlier phases of the development already include large areas of open space and an area for children's play equipment.

The additional development will generate the need for three LAPs (Local Areas of Play) A larger area for play activities would also normally be required. In general, the LAPs are to be easily accessible for families within the general housing area and should be designed to suit young children supervised by adults. The precise location and facilities to be provided are to be agreed with the Borough Council's Parks Officer.

Initially the Developers designated a large Area for Play at the eastern edge of the site. However, following consultations with the Roche Parish Council it has been agreed that rather than provide an additional recreation area the village community as a whole, would receive greater benefit from improvements being carried out and equipment being provided at the existing Recreation Ground in Bugle Road. The Developer will make a contribution to the Parish Council to improve the existing Recreation facilities. The amount of contribution will be based on the cost of providing the Play Area as originally suggested.

**(d) Landscaping**

It will be necessary to soften the eastern and southern boundaries of the site with gentle earth mounding and screen planting using indigenous trees and shrubs incorporating granite boulders to the south boundary. Other areas of the site should include shrub and tree planting in accordance with a scheme to be approved by the Planning Authorities Forestry Officer and Parks Officer. Hard landscaping shall be as outlined earlier, in accordance with a scheme to be approved by the Planning Authority.

**(e) Transportation**

The development scheme will provide a network of roads and footways/cycleways that will provide safe access to the new homes and also to surrounding existing facilities. Links through the development site to the school are to be included. A pedestrian link between the development and The Rock Inn should also be investigated and incorporated if appropriate.

Roads are to be laid out on a less formal basis than than was the case for earlier housing developments. Carriageways are to be more circuitous and inter-linked, avoiding cul-de-sacs where possible. They may also be of variable width, with widening in places to allow for on-street parking. Careful design of the road layout is to discourage use as through routes. Good pedestrian links are to be a fundamental part of the access strategy. Long, narrow 'alley-type' footpaths are to be avoided. Temporary footpath links will be provided during the period of construction to separate pedestrians from construction traffic and allow residents safe access through the site.

Traffic calming measures will be incorporated in the scheme and along existing roads close to the access points of the site. Where possible, within the site, this will be achieved by including bends in the roads, although this may not always be practicable. A balance will need to be struck between traffic calming priorities and practical issues such as sewer and highway drain installation, generally requiring straight runs.

Government guidance requires the use of cars to be discouraged and the development proposals will need to account for the specific advice in PPG3 and PPG13. The minimisation of parking can assist in this objective although a balance needs to be struck to avoid under-providing and thereby encouraging parking congestion. In addition, relatively low levels of parking can only normally be sustained if there is a particularly strong public transport system locally available. Roche is quite isolated from the main towns and is not well served by public transport. Investigations have revealed that this is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. In view of these factors, a car parking standard of approximately 1.5 car spaces per dwelling is to be applied. Where lower density dwellings are provided, 2 car spaces per dwelling can be included within the curtilage. Where the housing density is higher, one allocated space per dwelling will be provided plus additional visitor parking. Several disabled persons spaces will need to be provided throughout the development. Where possible, the main areas of residents parking should be sited away from public view but, in the interests of security, overlooked by dwellings.

## **6. Implementation and Phasing**

### ***(a) Phasing of Residential Development***

Phases 1 and 2 of the development for 52 dwellings is nearing completion.

The Local Plan restricted the number of dwellings that can be built at the main body of this site before 2006, to 70 units, at a maximum density of 25 units per hectare. This was to ensure that the allocated area was developed throughout the period of the Plan at a density then considered appropriate for this site. Since the Local Plan was prepared, Government guidance has changed requiring housing densities to be increased. This, together with a pressing need to provide affordable housing at Roche and the inclusion within the site of the Tregarrick Farmstead area, enables the 70 dwelling limit to be substantially increased.

### ***(b) Drainage***

A planning application for 4 dwellings off Duke's Court has been submitted to the Planning Authority with a proposal to connect foul drainage to a temporary septic tank. It will no longer be necessary to provide such temporary facilities. The Planning Application has now been approved.

## **7. Concept Master Plan**

The accompanying concept plan seeks to apply the development principles described above and provide illustrative information on the development site in relation to its surroundings. The main elements are as follows:

- The main development site is outlined in red.
- Tregarrick Farm re-development site is outlined brown.
- Primary estate roads are shown by red broken lines.
- Secondary estate roads are shown by yellow lines.
- Open spaces and play areas are green.
- New link footpaths are indicated by pink lines.
- It will be seen that a part of the site is shown accessed from Tregarrick Road, but with the main access off Bugle Road. A footpath and emergency link joins the two areas.
- Access points to the school land are shown at the boundaries of the development.

In addition, this brief includes a photographic landscape analysis and sketch proposals illustrating some of the main design issues.