

# Carn Thomas, Isles of Scilly

Design and Access Statement

July 2023 Rev A

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# Project information

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PROJECT: Carn Thomas, Isles of Scilly  
JOB NO. 21024  
STATUS: Full Planning Application  
DATE: January 2023

Site Location





# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## SITE LOCATION & PLANNING CONTEXT

**1.01** This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of LiveWest for the submission and approval of a full and detailed planning application on land designated for residential development in accordance with Isles of Scilly Adopted Local Plan 2015 - 2030 under policy LC6, site allocation H1 relating to an edge of settlement & Former Secondary School brown field site comprising of 0.54 Hectares at Carn Thomas, Hugh Town, St Mary's, for around 26 homes of an appropriate scale and design, which will require:

- i) Appropriate connections and upgrades to water and sewerage. With any planned improvement taken into consideration; and
- ii) An appropriate heritage assessment to guide the design of the scheme, to ensure to the setting of important heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, in the vicinity of this site, given its prominent location

**1.02** This allocation was nonetheless a clear indication that the IoS Council believed the site to be in a suitable and sustainable location to accommodate residential development with a reduced parking provision in accordance with the recommendations of the Campbell Raith report.

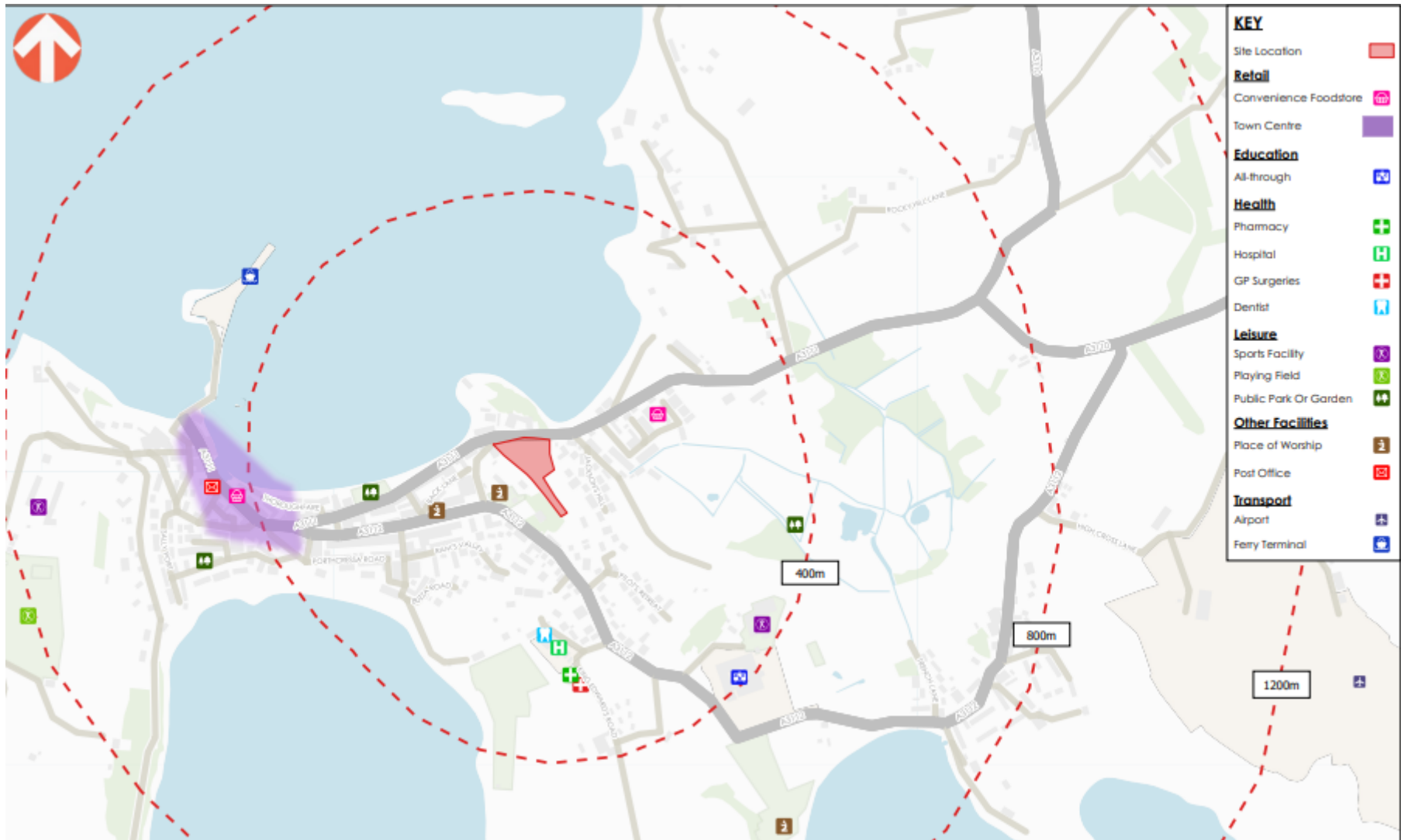
This full & detailed planning application involves the proposed construction of 27 new homes, including details of landscaping, surface water management, bio diversity net gain, on-site access footpaths, vehicle parking, refuse and cycle provision, provision of public open space together with technical details connected to a single point of vehicular access off Telegraph Road.

**1.04** This planning application is not only intended to be 'policy compliant' but will also deliver a 100% affordable housing scheme in both social and market rented tenures utilising national funding from Homes England in order to provide much needed affordable homes for key workers.

**1.05** This statement should be read in conjunction with the other supporting information submitted with this detailed /full planning application which includes :-

- Landscaping details (both hard and soft) including planting schedules prepared by Foxford Design, Landscape Architects.
- A Landscape and Visual Impact Study (LVIA) also prepared by Foxford Design, Landscape Architects.
- An Ecological Assessment & DEFRA Bio Diversity Net Gain Matrix Calculation prepared by Plan for Ecology.

- Details of Surface Water & Foul Drainage Design plus a Flood Risk Assessment prepared by MBA Consulting Engineers.
- A Traffic Survey / Transport Statement & Addendum prepared by Awcock Ward Partnership, (AWP), Transport Consultants.
- A Historic Environment Impact Assessment prepared by AC Archaeology.
- A Site Slope Stability Report by Karn Geo.
- An Arboricultural Appraisal and Constraints Plan prepared Devon Tree Services.
- A Lighting Scheme prepared by Kingfisher Lighting Ltd.
- A Low & Zero Carbon Appraisal undertaken by SDS Engineering Services.
- A Noise Assessment by ACT Acoustics.
- A Utilities Assessment & Ventilation Statement prepared by Kirkham Board Associates.
- Housing Statement prepared by LiveWest.
- Statement of Community Involvement also prepared by LiveWest.



Site location in context to main facilities of Hugh Town.



## 2.0 SITE APPRAISAL

### Location

**2.01** The site is located at Carn Thomas, south of Telegraph Road (A211) on the eastern fringes of Hugh Town, between Town and Porth Mellon beaches, along the north coast of St Mary's, the largest of five inhabited islands that form the archipelago of the Isles of Scilly which are 28 miles off the south west coast of Cornwall.

**2.02** The application area, defined by the red line as shown on the site location plan on page 6 and also on the page opposite, comprises of the former Carn Thomas Secondary School, now demolished, to the north and northeast of the Church of St Mary's. The site is irregular in shape albeit with a larger triangular area of land to the north abutting Telegraph Road which in turn is connected by a significant slope to the south to a narrow but relatively level strip of land (orientated south east– north west) forming a plateau where a Tennis Court that once served the school still exists.

**2.03** In total the site is approximately 0.54 hectares in size and lies between 8m and 20m above Ordnance Datum.

**2.04** Carn Thomas is the largest of three sites allocated for housing that has been identified in the local plan to the eastern side of Hugh Town, St Mary's largest settlement and also the main administrative centre for the islands.

**2.05** The geographic isolation, sparse population and exceptional quality of the natural and historic environment are the mainstay of the islands attracting an income from Tourism. The high quality landscape is the basis of the islands designation as an Area of Outstanding Beauty and Heritage Coast. In addition the Islands are covered by a blanket Conservation Area Status as well as numerous other ecological and heritage designations.

**2.06** The Carn Thomas site which is located on a slight rise along Telegraph Road also forms the main gateway from the east of St Mary's into Hugh Town. The site also defines the boundary between the Porth Mellon commercial estate and the suburban fringes of Hugh Town.

**2.07** From the context plan shown on the opposite page although relatively small, Hugh Town contains many local facilities including retail, education, health, leisure, public recreation as well as places of worship all within a 400 metre radius or 5 minute walk of Carn Thomas, which by virtue of its good footpath links qualifies the site as being construed to being in a very sustainable location.

**2.08** There are no existing structures to be retained on the site other than boundary walls and in terms of Architectural precedents there is a mix of styles both traditional and modern in close proximity.

**2.09** The proposed scheme is supported by detailed reports that cover ecology, highways, heritage asset impact and drainage. Moreover

due to the site's location in a Area of Outstanding Beauty and the fact it is also prominent when viewed from key distant vantage points, LiveWest have also had a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment undertaken in order to aid and shape the scheme proposals.

**2.10** As stated in the ecology report, appropriate measures will be put in place to ensure ecological benefits through the implementation of ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures. The proposals also in accordance with Plan for Ecology's assessment will deliver a significant positive biodiversity gain.

**2.11** Although the site does not lie within a critical drainage zone and it also does not exceed 1 hectare in size, MBA Consulting, have nevertheless prepared a Flood Risk Assessment which can be found in support of this application.

In this assessment it was concluded that the proposed development does not increase the risk of offsite flooding and that the existing surface water drainage infrastructure (that once served the former Secondary School) has sufficient capacity for the new anticipated run off plus that also required for climate change purposes.

**2.12** In respect of foul drainage all effluent issuing from the proposed development will likewise be connected to the existing 150mm Diameter foul sewer that once served the former Secondary School.

## Site Photographs



*View A* from northern footpath on the crest of Telegraph Road looking East opposite the existing site entrance.



*View B* from opposite to the existing site entrance along Telegraph Road looking west towards Hugh Town.





*View C of the site looking East from the lower cleared plateau (post demolition).*



*View D West facing view of the site from the lower cleared eastern half of the lower plateau (post demolition).*



# Site Photographs



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.





7.



**2.13** Although surrounded by distant heritage assets AC Archaeology who were commissioned by the LiveWest to undertake an Historic Environment Impact Assessment concluded in their report that due to limited intervisibility (ratified also by Foxford Design's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment) that any proposed development would not have a detrimental impact because of the existing topography and perimeter hedgerows and vegetation that screen the site from distant viewpoints.

**2.14** The historic mapping record confirms that the site prior to its use as a school was on the fringes of land used for agricultural purposes and consequently there is no map based or physical evidence to suggest that contamination is present on site.



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**2.15** Finally to address any potential concerns regarding the potential increase in traffic along Telegraph Road and also entering and leaving the development safely using the existing site entrance, LiveWest have also had commissioned a Traffic survey (both volumetric and speed) undertaken by AWP Traffic Consultants which has led to the production of a Transport Statement that in turn stated the number of increased vehicular movements resulting from the proposed development would be negligible.

# 3.0 Development constraints & opportunities



- Site boundary
- ← Proposed access
- █ Site/area of dense scrub
- █ Steep bank
- █ Former tennis courts
- █ Flat, elevated area with stone wall boundaries
- █ Invasive plant species to be removed
- █ Nearby buildings
- █ Nearby listed buildings
- █ Existing hedgerow
- - - - Demolished former buildings
- - - - Existing routes
- - - - Existing storm water drain



## CONSTRAINTS

### ECOLOGICAL

- 1 Area of invasive species
- 2 Existing Trees

### PHYSICAL

- 1 Site Boundary
- 2 Adjacent Buildings
- 3 Proximity Of Nearby Listed Buildings
- 4 Steep Gradients
- 5 Difficult To Service / Access South Of Site

### INFRASTRUCTURAL

- 1 Drainage Easement Across NW Corner Of Site

## OPPORTUNITIES

### ECOLOGICAL

- 3 Dense Scrub - Potential For Habit Creation
- 4 Species Poor Hedgerow
- 5 Soft Landscaped Area To Enhance Biodiversity
- 6 Proposed New Additional Planting

### PHYSICAL

- 6 Onsite Electrical Connection
- 7 Existing Storm Water Sewer Connection
- 8 No Unusual Ground Conditions
- 9 Unobstructed Visibility Spays From Site Entrance
- 10 Good Views Of Wider Landscape

### INFRASTRUCTURAL

- 3 Onsite Electrical Connection
- 4 Existing Storm Water Sewer Connection
- 5 Existing Foul Sewer Connection
- 6 Existing Water Main Supply

# 4.0 SITE & BUILDING DESIGN

## Site Analysis

### 4.01 Local Context

The site is located in the Carn Thomas and Buzza Hill area of Hugh Town, the Isles of Scilly largest and most significant settlement. As a consequence of its importance and location in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty an historic character area study was undertaken by the Cornwall and Scilly Urban Survey in 2003 for the purpose of providing an information base in order to contribute positively towards any future regeneration proposals.

### 4.02 Historic settlement development

There has been human activity in the area around Hugh Town for at least 4000 years, with archaeological evidence for settlement from the Bronze Age to the early Christian period. The present town, however, had its origins around the quay built to serve the major defensive complex, 'the Garrison' created at the end of the 16th century on the headland to the west.

### 4.03 Historic settlement character

Hugh Town's history has created a settlement with a strong, locally distinctive character. Major elements of this include:

- \* The town's striking topographic location on a narrow isthmus that is 500 Metres long and 150 metres wide.

- The Town's strong presence within 'natural' elements: landforms, greenery and gardens, and spectacular views of the sea and off islands.
- Its strong 'urban' quality, despite its relatively small size and population.
- A distinctive architectural style of great charm and visual appeal
- A high degree of completeness in the historic built environment.
- Good survival of extremely high quality architectural detail.



*Birds eye view of Hugh Town from the North West*



*Birds eye view of Hugh Town from the South West*

- An unusually prominent and successful contribution to the built environment from the first half of the 20th century.
- A significant later 20th century component, some elements of which have a negative impact on the town's character and distinctiveness.

### 4.04 Character areas and regeneration opportunities

The Cornwall and Scilly Urban survey identified nine distinct Character Areas within the historic urban area of Hugh Town. Its findings on these areas, together with an assessment of overall





settlement character, offer a means of understanding the past and the present. In turn, that understanding provides the basis for a positive approach to planning future change which will maintain and reinforce the historic

## Character areas

(Defined by Cornwall & Scilly Urban Survey – Cornwall County Council 2002)\*

- 1 Church: Carn Thomas and Buzza Hill
- 2 Church Street and the Parade
- 3 Town Beach Thoroughfare and the Strand
- 4 Porthcressa Bank
- 5 Porthcressa post-war housing
- 6 The Historic Core : the Bank and Hugh Street
- 7 Garrison Lane, Garrison Hill and Jerusalem Terrace
- 8 The Quay
- 9 The Garrison

character and individuality of each area with the aim of achieving sustainable local distinctiveness.

A summary of the character attributes for the Church, Carn Thomas & Buzza Hill area and key themes for heritage led regeneration are set out on the page to follow .