

Report to:	Service Director – Planning and Sustainable Development	
Date:	22 November 2019	
Title:	St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan: Making of Plan	
Portfolio Area:	Culture, Economy and Planning	
Divisions Affected:	Launceston North and North Petherwin	
Local Member(s) briefed:	Y	
Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Economic Growth and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
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Approval and clearance obtained:	Y	
For Cabinet and delegated executive decisions only		
Key decision?	N	
Published in advance on Cabinet Work Programme?	Y	
Urgency Procedure(s) used if 'N' to Work Programme?	N/A	
Date next steps can be taken	Upon Publication	

1. Recommendations:

That the St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan, having been approved by more than half of those voting at referendum held on 14 November 2019, is made and is used, as part of the development plan for Cornwall, in development management decisions in the parish of St Stephen by Launceston Rural, pursuant to section 38A (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan (the NDP) was successful at Examination on 11 September 2019 and referendum on 14 November 2019. A simple majority is required for an NDP to progress. In this case there were 110 'yes' votes and 19 'no' votes: 85% in favour.
- 2.2 The NDP can now formally be made, which means it is adopted and forms part of the development plan for Cornwall and is used in decision making in the NDP area, St Stephen by Launceston Rural Parish.

3. Purpose of Report and key information

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans and to take plans through a process of Examination and Referendum.
- 3.2 The St Stephen by Launceston Rural NDP has been through the statutory stages of neighbourhood plan making in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (the Regulations):
 - a. Area designation
 - b. Pre-submission consultation
 - c. Legal Compliance check
 - d. Publication consultation
 - e. Examination
 - f. Plan Proposal decision
 - g. Referendum

The relevant Council decisions taken are detailed in section 4, below.

- 3.3 The next stage is to 'make' the Plan – i.e. adopt it as part of the planning policy framework. The Regulations state that this must take place within 8 weeks of the day following the date on which the referendum was held. The referendum was held on 14 November 2019, so the NDP must be 'made' by 10 January 2020.

4. Benefits for Customers/Residents

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for the local community to influence place making and planning decisions in their local area. The Cornwall Local Plan supports the production of neighbourhood plans and the spatial strategy requires development proposals to 'assist the creation of resilient and cohesive communities' and as part of this 'Support[ing] the delivery of made Neighbourhood Plans and other community based initiatives that help to make communities more resilient.' (Cornwall Local Plan, Policy 2 – Spatial Strategy.) Residents of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, St Stephen by

Launceston Rural Parish, have had the opportunity to be involved in the research for and writing of the NDP and through the consultation and engagement associated with the NDP's development have been able to contribute their ideas and views.

- 4.2 For applicants, agents and developers wishing to submit proposals in the area, the NDP adds extra detail to the strategic policies for the area, so that applicants will have information about community expectations when preparing an application and can tailor their proposal accordingly.

5. Relevant Previous Decisions

St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan Proceed to Referendum Decision Notice – 11 September 2019.

The final version of the Plan, incorporating the Examiner's recommended amendments, published alongside the Notice of Referendum.

St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan Legal Compliance Decision Notice – 25 January 2019.

The Submission draft plan, following pre-submission consultation carried out by the qualifying body. The LPA carries out a legal compliance check and publishes the Plan for Regulation 16 'publication' consultation.

St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan Area Designation – 28 January 2016.

At the start of the process the Parish Council applied to designate their parish as a NDP Area.

All previous reports and versions of the Plan are available on the Cornwall Council website on a page dedicated to [St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan](#).

6. Consultation and Engagement

- 6.1 The first statutory round of consultation occurs at area designation stage. St Stephen by Launceston Rural Parish Council submitted an application and map to designate their Neighbourhood Area. Cornwall Council consulted residents and other interested stakeholders on the designation between 3 December 2015 and 21 January 2016. Copies of the application letter and statement that explains how the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Area met the conditions of Section 61G(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the 1990 Act), were made available to view at Launceston Library and Information Service (formerly the one stop shop) during the six week consultation

period. The Cornwall Council then formally designated the Neighbourhood Area.

- 6.2 After this notification that a Parish Council is preparing a NDP and until the point that the NDP is submitted to Cornwall Council the responsibility for consultation and engagement on the NDP falls to the qualifying body, which is St Stephen by Launceston Rural Parish Council. This process is tested for compliance at the independent examination and the Qualifying Body is required to submit a Consultation Statement, which evidences that the Regulations have been complied with.

The Consultation Statement:

- (a) contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan;
 - (b) explains how they were consulted, which included a number of questionnaires being distributed for businesses, residents and to find out the housing need, discussions with landowners, a number of public meetings were held through the neighbourhood plan process and a newsletter was distributed to residents.
 - (c) summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
 - (d) describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 6.3 The next statutory consultation stage is the pre-submission consultation on the draft Plan, (which was carried out by the Parish Council, in compliance with Regulation 14 of the 2012 Regulations); the representations on which have to be received not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the plan proposal is first publicised at this stage. The statutory pre-submission consultation was held from 25 June 2018 to 6 August 2018, where the 'Consultation Bodies,' as set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations, were consulted. Any comments submitted during this consultation must be summarised and included in the Consultation Statement, with a note of what action was taken in response.
- 6.4 Once the Plan is submitted and judged to be legally compliant, Cornwall Council publicises the draft NDP in the next round of statutory consultation (in accordance with Regulation 16 of the 2012 Regulations); the representations on which have to be received not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the plan proposal is first publicised at this stage. The statutory consultation by Cornwall Council was held from 30 January to 13 March 2019.

- 6.5 The Plan proposal included a copy of a map and a statement which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates, a Consultation Statement, the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan, a Design Guide and a statement explaining how the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (the Basic Conditions Statement).
- 6.6 Copies of the documents were available to view on the website, or through the Planning Register (planning application number PA19/00004/NDP) and hard copies were available to view at Launceston Library, Homeleigh Garden Centre and Langore Village Hall during the consultation period. The Council sent the Plan proposal and representations to the Independent Examiner on 18 March 2019 and on 1 August 2019 the Independent Examiner issued a report to Cornwall Council and St Stephen by Launceston Rural Parish Council.
- 6.7 On 11 September 2019 the Council published the report, considered it and took the decision to send the draft NDP to referendum.
- 6.8 An information statement was issued by the Council on 7 October 2019. The referendum took place on 14 November 2019 and the results were declared on 15 November 2019.

7. Financial Implications of the proposed course of action/ decision

There are no further major costs to Cornwall Council.

8. Legal/Governance Implications of the proposed course of action/decision

- 8.1 This is the final regulatory stage of the NDP process for the St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Council has to be satisfied that the making of the NDP does not breach any EU obligations or the European Convention on Human Rights as enacted in the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 8.2 The Plan has been screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and the Screening Opinion was that SEA and HRA were not required. A Comprehensive Impact Assessment (CIA) was undertaken at the Legal Compliance Check and Post Examination stages. The Council is satisfied that the making of the NDP does not breach any EU obligations or the European Convention on Human Rights as enacted in the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 8.3 The Examiner confirmed in his report that he was satisfied that the NDP was compliant with European and Human Rights Legislation.

9. Risk Implications of the proposed course of action/decision

- 9.1 There is a right to challenge the Council's decision to 'make' a Neighbourhood Development Plan, pursuant to section 61E (4) or (8) of the 1990 Act and in accordance with Section 61N (1) of the 1990 Act the proceedings must be brought by way of judicial review, within 6 weeks of the day after the day of publication of the decision to make.

10. Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications

- 10.1 The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on all public authorities to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between persons who have a "protected characteristic" and those who do not. The protected characteristics are Age, Disability, Gender Re-assignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation and in Cornwall an additional characteristic, Cornish Status.
- 10.2 The NDP has been developed to be in general conformity with the Cornwall Local Plan, which was subject to Examination in Public and found to be sound. The Cornwall Local Plan provides for the objectively assessed need for housing to meet the needs of all the community, against which the conformity of the NDP has been tested.
- 10.3 The Cornwall Local Plan has been subject to Comprehensive Impact Assessment. This concluded that the current and future businesses and residents of, and visitors to, Cornwall will be affected by the land use policies in terms of provision of jobs, homes, infrastructure, access to services and the protection of the environment. The Policies' objectives are to plan for the needs of the whole community now and in the future; the Plan period is to 2030. In addition, where evidence demonstrates a need, a number of protected characteristic groups are positively planned for, with specific provision for the elderly and disabled through supported accommodation.
- 10.4 The housing and affordable housing targets aim to ensure appropriate housing is available to meet local needs over the Plan period. Failing to provide sufficient housing will impact most on disadvantaged groups.
- 10.5 A CIA of the NDP was carried out as part of the Legal Compliance Check and Post Examination Stages. The CIA concluded that the St Stephen by Launceston Rural NDP provides a strategy for the development of the Neighbourhood Area and a range of policies, which will result in positive benefits for the local community.
- 10.6 The key positive impacts are promoting sustainable development, providing housing to meet local need, conserving and enhancing biodiversity, small scale employment or business development,

designation of local green space, protecting non-designated heritage assets, improvements to existing or new provision of footpaths and cycle ways, support for renewable energy schemes and promoting community engagement and involvement in planning.

11. Options available

11.1 Cornwall Council has a duty to support communities who are preparing neighbourhood plans. The Regulations detail the Council's responsibilities. The NDP has been independently examined and found to meet the Basic Conditions; it has been endorsed by the community at referendum and has otherwise complied with all the legal requirements of plan production. It is considered that the NDP meets European legislation and is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. The NDP should therefore be 'made.' Failure to take the Plan forward to referendum would risk customer dissatisfaction and be a failure of the Council's duty.

12. Supporting Information (Appendices)

Appendix 1: St Stephen by Launceston Rural Neighbourhood Plan
Appendix 2: Declaration of Referendum Result

13. Background Papers

None

14. Approval and clearance

All reports:

Final report sign offs	This report has been cleared by (or mark not required if appropriate)	Date
Governance/Legal (Required for all reports)	Ben Curnow	22/11/2019
Finance (Required for all reports)	Geraldine Baker	19/11/2019
Equality and Diversity (If required)		
On Behalf of the Service Director (Required for all reports)	Hayley Jewels	26/11/2019

Strategic Director (If required)		
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