

# Roche Parish Neighbourhood Plan



2016 to 2030



# ROCHE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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## APPENDIX 1: ROCHE PARISH DESIGN GUIDE





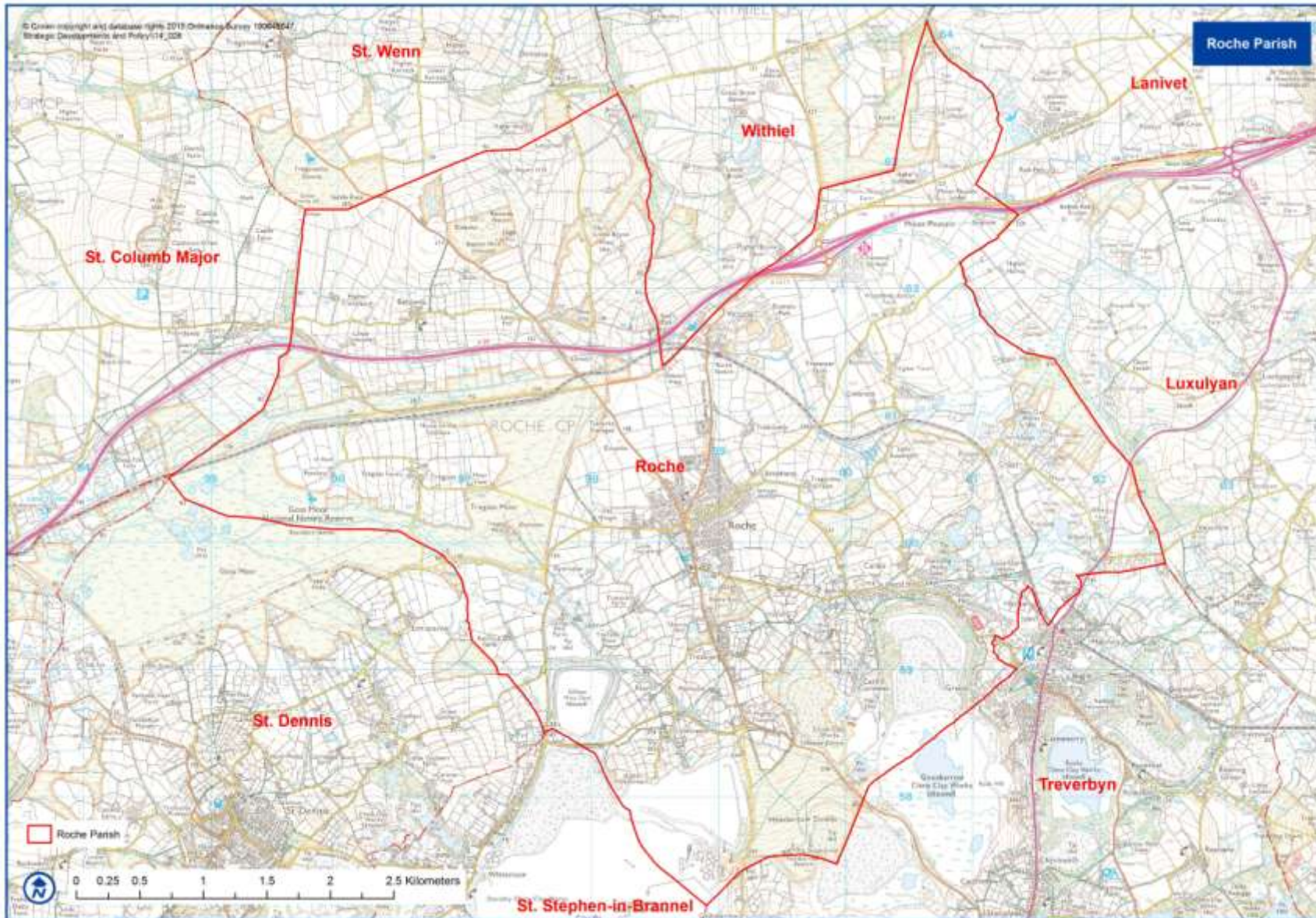


Figure 1.1 - Map of Roche Parish



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

**The Roche Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to ensure that future growth and development in the Parish is shaped by local people to sustain and improve the quality of the community and its built and natural environment, in order to support sustainable development. It seeks to protect the unique character of this parish, and ensure that further development will contribute towards creating and maintaining a strong, sustainable community with high quality place-making.**

Neighbourhood Planning builds on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the draft Cornwall Local Plan to give an extra level of detail at the local level. In accordance with NPPF (§184 and §185) the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared so as to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan (here the saved policies of the Restormel Local Plan). Regard has also been had to the policies of the draft Cornwall Local Plan.

Such Neighbourhood Planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals. This is because unlike the parish, village or town plans that communities may have prepared in the past (as Roche Parish did), a Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the Local Plan prepared by the local planning authority. Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan, and any other material considerations.

Therefore Neighbourhood Planning provides the opportunity for Roche Parish to not only set out a positive vision for how we want our community to develop over the period until 2030 (the same period as the draft Cornwall Local Plan) in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people, but to put in place planning policies that will help

deliver that vision or grant planning permission for the development we want to see.

To help deliver this vision Roche Parish Council took the proactive approach of initiating this Neighbourhood Plan and seeking to secure the consent of local people in a referendum. In turn, the community will also benefit from 25 percent of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy (once Cornwall Council have that in place) arising from any development that takes place in the Parish. This will contribute to parish funds, enabling improved local services.

At every stage the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group consulted extensively with the local community, including public meetings and door to door surveys. At the final consultation stage the proposal received in excess of 90% support in the collated survey response.

There was throughout the process of consulting upon and drawing up the Roche Neighbourhood Plan, recognition that under the legislation it cannot promote less development than is proposed in the Local Plan, but should build upon its foundations. The Neighbourhood Plan that has now been created is pro-growth and consistent with the saved policies from the adopted Restormel Local Plan, and planned to be consistent with the draft Cornwall Local Plan. The plan is pro-growth provided that such growth seeks to ameliorate any negative impacts of growth on the community, and the Neighbourhood Plan sets out how to achieve this.

### WHY ROCHE NEEDS THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Rapid housing expansion in the Village has taken place due to relatively cheap land with easy access to main roads and existing services. Roche's location in the county and lower than average house prices have made it an attractive place for young families and first time buyers to settle. Taken together this has doubled the Parish population over the past 25 years.



Traffic growth is an even greater issue than the population growth. Roche is located on the B3274 which links St Austell in the south to the A30 and Newquay and Padstow in the north. This channels substantial traffic through Trezaise, Roche and Victoria, acting as the main HGV route between the western communities of St Austell and the China Clay area to the A30. It is also heavily used by aggregate HGVs from the west of St Austell clay areas St Dennis and Whitemoor. The most recent traffic survey in the centre of Roche averaged one HGV every minute travelling through the Village from 7am to 7pm.

However, planners have not always secured high quality place making here and there has been too little in place to achieve such high quality design. Moreover, rapid growth has led to increased pressure on local services – for example, local school places are consequently in short supply; important green spaces have been under threat of unwelcome development; traffic has increased substantially, yet safe pedestrian routes have not been achieved.

The Neighbourhood Plan for Roche allows all these issues to be addressed (quality, location and quantity of development, safe pedestrian links, reduced traffic impacts, provision of school places, the preservation and enhancement of rural communities, historic buildings and features, and protecting key open spaces). It puts the community in charge of its own destiny.

***The vision for the future of Roche Parish is: 'Supporting a thriving parish to meet local needs, and enhance its character and distinctiveness for a sustainable future'.***

## ABOUT ROCHE PARISH

Roche Parish is a civil parish in mid-Cornwall, on the northern edge of the China Clay communities. There were 1592 dwellings in the Parish according to the most recent (2011) census and the population was 3381.

The largest settlement by far is Roche Village itself. South of Roche but connected to it is Trezaise, a primarily linear community extending from Roche along the main road south. Half a mile north of Roche Village is the settlement of Victoria where Roche railway station is situated along with some housing and services (e.g. pub, café, petrol station) but chiefly business premises – including some large retail units along the old A30, the Victoria Business Park, and most recently the Cornwall Services development on the A30 junction. The new A30 dual carriageway intersects the northern edge of the Parish here.

Roche Village itself is located 6 miles from St Austell on the south coast and 12 miles from Newquay on the north coast. The Village gets its name from a granite outcrop east of the Village, with Roche being the Norman-French word for rock. On top of Roche Rock is a ruined chapel (dedicated to St Michael).

The Parish Church of St Gomonda/Gonandus (Fig. 1.2), is situated on a vantage point overlooking the main body of the Village; together with the Chapel on Roche Rock, a Scheduled Monument, it is one of the principal focal points in a much wider area.



**Figure 1.2 - Roche Parish Church**

It is a Grade II\* listed building, with a medieval tower, but with most of the surviving fabric and character dating from the restoration of 1890 by the great Victorian church architect J.D Sedding. Associated with the Old Rectory to the north, which was linked to the church through a formal and informal landscape in the style of a mini Country House and Park, the group stands as a symbol of the



rich history of the Village, and of its significant heritage of both designated and undesignated historic buildings and sites.

Because the Village, has over the past 25 years, more than doubled in its population, it has expanded its housing beyond the traditional limits of the Village. This growth was referenced in the St Austell, St Blazey and China Clay Area Regeneration Plan Guidelines for Transformational Development Projects [Planning Future Cornwall Regeneration Plan].

***“During the 20 years between 1991-2011 there has been a 28% growth in housing across Cornwall but many parishes within the plan areas have far exceeded that average. The Parish of Roche has had a 75% increase in housing stock...It is important that new development delivers transformational change and isn’t solely focused on those areas that have historically taken the majority of growth.”*** Page 10, para 4

Since then, however, growth in Roche has actually accelerated. The number of completions and commitments since 2010 alone in the Parish is 393, with more than half of these in Roche Village and Trezaise. As a result, the Village has had to cope with substantial negative impacts: including the loss of some significant views of Roche Rock from the heart of the Village through unsympathetic development (Fig. 1.3), substantial traffic growth and a shortage of school places such that siblings of local pupils unable to gain places are having to be taxied to other schools.



**Figure 1.3 - Modern housing developments have been allowed to encroach on Roche Rock**

Current transport links to the Village consist of easy access to the A30 trunk road to the north, a branch line railway station at Victoria which connects with Newquay to the north and Par (on the main line) to the south. There is an hourly bus route (the number 27, operated by First Group) directly connecting with Bodmin, Truro and to St. Austell. Regular but in-direct bus routes to Newquay and other destinations are also available.

The road through Trezaise, Roche and Victoria (the B3274) forms one of the primary links between St. Austell and the A30 (and to Newquay), a fact that has as already stated generated substantial traffic through the settlement, with approximately one HGV through Roche every minute on average 7am to 7pm.

### Trezaise

Trezaise and Higher Trezaise form a linear settlement along the main road south of Roche and comprise a sporadic extension of the main village.

They are particularly impacted by the heavy fast traffic (Fig. 1.4), and Higher Trezaise in particular is badly provisioned for pedestrians and dangerous for cyclists and other vulnerable road users due to lack of footpaths along the narrow, twisting but heavily trafficked fast carriageway.



**Figure 1.4 - Heavy traffic through Trezaise**

### Victoria

In contrast to Roche Village, Victoria has long been primarily an industrial/business/retail

area. There are however a range of community assets with the pub/hotel, cafés, petrol station, and some housing. Alongside are out of town retail units along the old A30, mostly quite dilapidated and in some cases empty. The modern business estate in contrast is thriving. Just down the road, the new Cornwall Services site has recently opened, adding further facilities (food outlets, coffee shop, newsagent, indoor play and a planned hotel). Victoria sits north of the railway line and the Victoria Road rail bridge – south of which there is a distinct green gap separating Victoria from Roche.

Victoria Road, which links Victoria to Roche Village, takes heavy traffic but is narrow and has no pavement for most of its length. This is highly dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists moving between the two settlements to access work, shops, and the railway station.

Besides the Village of Roche and Trezaise, and the business orientated developments around Victoria (which provides the majority of local employment), the Parish is largely rural in nature, with some small hamlets, and scattered small groups of buildings and individual properties, many agricultural. To the north-west are the Goss Moor and Tregoss Special Area of Conservation (SAC). To the east the Parish borders the settlement of Bugle. The rural hamlets are attractive and little impacted by recent development, and include some fine well preserved stone built properties of all sizes.

Although its industrial past was an important element in shaping the Village and Parish, in contrast with other clay parishes, the settlements and landscape have not been hugely impacted by China Clay mining and tipping – much of the medieval field structure remains, with tipping confined to the southerly boundaries.

Housing growth in the Parish has been, and is expected to continue to be, predominantly focused on Roche Village, although there have been small developments in Trezaise, and extensive business developments in Victoria (where there is opportunity for regen-

eration and growth through mixed development, and extension of the Business Park).

## CHARACTER OF ROCHE VILLAGE

Given the focus of housing growth in Roche Village, and a history of unsympathetic large scale development, it has been important to examine and understand the character of this settlement in order to inform plan making and development management going forward.

Roche Village was always a churchtown – an ecclesiastical, administrative, marketing and service centre rather than overtly an industrial or commercial settlement. There was certainly an industrial element in the population (the terraced housing in Tremodrett Road and Chapel Road was reputedly built for clay workers), and much of the economic prosperity and employment here was linked to the dominant china industry. However the history of numerous smithies, wheelwrights, saw pits, workshops and shops also clearly served a thriving agricultural population, and this is reflected in its character today.

So the population of the Village was a mix of agricultural (including the part-time smallholders, also active as industrial labourers and carriers), and commercial and what was termed in 19th century trade directories as ‘private’ or ‘gentry’, which included Anglican and non-conformist clergy, school teachers, retired businessmen and professionals. This historic range of people, of uses of buildings, of scales of wealth, all still inform the very varied character of the Village today – very different in character from many of the ‘industrial’ villages of the Hensbarrow area.

Historically there were three main distinct areas to the Village. First was the Churchtown at the top of what is now Fore Street, set amid a medieval landscape, with church, rectory, large farms and Inn; second was the lower town, with shops, houses, cottages, smallholdings and chapels; thirdly, and joining the two is the late 19th century rebuilt commercial core around the central road junction (and spreading up Fore Street). These divi-

sions are to some extent still maintained and visible today, preserved in part by the Local Plan development boundary and other designations, and by the ability of the generously scaled plots and open, low density grid of the early 19th century to absorb later development. Only in recent years has housing spread beyond this grid and the historic limits of the settlement, and encroaching upon virgin green-field land - the remnant open fields of the medieval landscape (Fig. 1.5).



**Figure 1.5 - Roche is set within the remnants of a medieval field system**

The most striking characteristic of Roche is that there are very few tightly packed terraces and buildings away from the central crossroads. The historic Village was spread over a relatively wide area, but densities were low, for the most part. The Village is mostly made up of individual, detached buildings standing in good sized, often very generous plots. The total number of buildings and population was not, therefore, large. However, the scale of recent development in and around Roche has been substantial compared to its size; hundreds have, in the last few decades, turned into a population of some 3000

and growing - the size of a small Cornish town.

As a result, and on the positive side the range of shops and facilities in Roche has remained quite large, including a Co-op store, butchers, newsagent/general store, grocers, Post Office, beauticians, laundrette, two pubs, take-away food shops, sports and recreation grounds, village and church halls, infant/junior school, various clubs and associations and a large modern GP practice.

Despite this concentration, the negative impact of the main road running through the Village has had the effect of creating a sense of a lack of focus in the streetscape and downgrading the appearance of many of these shops and facilities. The traffic, and the engineering and management measures that have been put into place to control it have had a negative effect on the character and appearance of the Village core. The historic 'square' has become little more than a token roundabout prioritising traffic over pedestrians (Fig. 1.6).

The amount of HGV traffic causes considerable loss of quality of life, and regular congestion in the square and at the Harmony Road junction in particular, as well as severe safety issues for residents on the Village approaches – especially through Higher Trezaise and Trezaise where footpaths are sporadic; and along Victoria Road (which is narrow and has no footpath linking the Village of Roche and its services to the railway station and the employment centre at Roche). Traffic has seriously eroded the character of the settlement.



**Figure 1.6 - Roche's historic square has been reduced to a roundabout**

The main road is, unfortunately, what most people see and know of Roche, but there is much else of often high quality, both of individual buildings, and whole areas and street-scapes. There are distinct sub-areas with discernibly different characteristics, much of it scarcely touched by the noise and pollution of the through-roads (Fig. 1.7). These areas do sometimes merge (Fore Street in particular acts as a link between the Churchtown and the lower town); sometimes there is a quite abrupt transition - a matter of yards - from one to the other (in appearance, in the types of buildings, in the levels of noise and pollution – as between Fore Street and Tremodrett Road or Victoria Road and Chapel Road).



*Figure 1.7 - Roche has distinctive suburbs often characterised by high quality individual buildings*

The Roche Parish Design Guide (Appendix 1) describes these character areas of the Village in detail, drawing on the work of the Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative report on Roche Village(2005), commissioned jointly by English Heritage, the former Cornwall County Council and the former Restormel Borough Council.

**A key aim of this Neighbourhood Plan is to encourage and support the protection and enhancement of these qualities and identity.**





## SECTION 2: POLICIES

The Neighbourhood Plan for Roche Parish has been extensively consulted upon amongst the local community and a clear vision and policy have emerged through this process.

Detailed evidence gathering has taken place and this has been reviewed by the Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. This has included four full leaflet surveys delivered door to door, three consultation events, and targeted surveys of businesses, young people (primary, secondary and tertiary), and the Minorca Lane traveller site.

The clear wish of the people living in the Parish is to secure and enhance the quality of life alongside encouraging new opportunities for growth in ways that do not undermine the character and distinctiveness of the landscape and historic settlements. This will be achieved by:

- Allocating sites to meet the evidenced local housing need identified in the draft Cornwall Local Plan and local Neighbourhood Plan survey;
- Supporting road schemes to take through traffic out of Roche and Treaise, enabled by additional housing growth and economic development contingent on this being achieved;
- Supporting sensitive economic growth, notably mixed use re-development at Victoria, and increased employment provision, subject to unacceptable traffic impact on Roche being avoided;
- Protecting Open Spaces and Wildlife species and habitats – in particular designating key sites as community open space; maintaining a green gap between Roche and Victoria; opposing inappropriate development outside the development boundary; protecting Roche Rock from encroachment; protect wildlife species and habitats by directing development to less sensitive sites and retaining important features of those sites; and designing wildlife

enhancements into all new developments at the earliest stage.

- Avoiding loss of local services, and supporting improved pedestrian linkage between Roche Village and Victoria, and between Roche Village and Higher Treaise;
- Taking a design led approach to ensure that future development enhances character and distinctiveness.

The Neighbourhood Plan has taken full account of existing policy guidance in NPPF, the saved policies of the Restormel Local Plan and emerging policies of the draft Cornwall Local Plan. All of the policies in this Plan have been designed to support and complement these wider national and county policies, and should be read in that context.

### A: HOUSING NEEDS AND ALLOCATIONS

#### Policy background and objectively assessed housing need.

Roche Parish has been subject to very rapid housing growth since 1991 (the great majority in Roche Village). According to the 'St Austell, St Blazey and China Clay Area Regeneration Plan Guidelines for Transformational Development Projects [Planning Future Cornwall Regeneration Plan]' (page 10, para 4):

***“During the 20 years between 1991-2011 there has been a 28% growth in housing across Cornwall but many of the parishes within the plan areas have far exceeded that average. The Parish of Roche has had a 75% increase in housing stock...It is important that new development delivers transformational change and isn't solely focused on those areas that have historically taken the majority of growth.”***

The community consultations for this plan support this concern to take a more measured approach to further growth and deliver transformational change, ensuring in particular that further development should address local housing needs (in terms of quality, market type, and location), and only be supported

if policies address the need for sufficient school places; mitigate traffic impacts; provide suitable play and recreation facilities; protect important green spaces, views and historic areas; and have the support of a well thought through design code and protection of historic character areas.

At the start of the Neighbourhood Plan process (September 2014) advice from Cornwall Council suggested (taking the Roche Parish 'share' of the then China Clay area draft Cornwall Plan housing numbers) the housing need in the Parish in the plan period 2010-2030 was in the range 150 to 300 (the higher number recognising that Roche is one of the larger China Clay area villages with one of the better facilities within it).

At that time we were informed by Cornwall Council that 240 homes had already (September 2014) been built or permitted in Roche Parish in the draft Cornwall Local Plan period 2010-2030.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group decided to take the higher 300 figure as the starting point for consultations for a number of reasons:

- The higher number would ensure we fully met the evidenced need
- The higher number would cover an increase if required in the draft Cornwall Local Plan by the inspector, so the Neighbourhood Plan would remain up to date
- As the lower end of the range had already been exceeded, we wished to allow further organic growth to meet local need

That left a residual requirement (on our 300 home figure) of circa 60 more homes when we started neighbourhood plan consultation. This formed the basis of the allocations discussed in the earlier consultation stages.

However in November 2015 we received updated figures from Cornwall Council on housing delivery and also the updated housing numbers in the draft Cornwall Local Plan

(which take account of the inspector's recommendation for an overall increase).

On Tuesday, 17th November the Cornwall Council Planning Policy Advisory Committee had received a report which set out proposed revisions to the draft Cornwall Local Plan ("Appendix 1: **Cornwall Local Plan: Strategic Policies** - Proposed changes for consultation 2016"). In this Appendix the revised China Clay Area housing numbers for the draft Cornwall Local Plan are set out. In addition the paper suggested allocations to the major China Clay Area settlements, plus a residual allocation for the remaining clay parish areas. Although the Committee decided not to make the specific allocations (on the basis that the draft Cornwall Local Plan is not elsewhere specifying numbers for rural communities, only for Cornwall's major towns), the paper does nonetheless show the pro-rata share for Roche of the latest draft Cornwall Local Plan housing figures – 210 new homes in the 2010-2030 draft Cornwall Local Plan.

The paper also shows that, on the latest figures, in the draft Cornwall Local Plan period 2010-2030 the number of completions and commitments in Roche is already 393 (November 2015 figure). Of this figure, as of November 2015 58 were approved but not yet complete. As the paper presented in November 2015 makes clear, this means Roche has notionally exceeded its pro-rata share already by 183 homes – unlike other clay communities and indeed Cornwall as a whole.

This is in contrast to the draft Cornwall Local Plan policy position: The Local Plan policy is clear that

***"New development should provide a sustainable approach to accommodating growth; providing a well balanced mix of economic, social and environmental benefits. This should maintain the dispersed development pattern of Cornwall and provide homes and jobs in a proportional manner based on the role and function of each place." (Draft Policy 2 - Spatial Strategy),***

However the figure of 393, of which 144 were completed in the last year to November 2015, is misleading: The majority (116) of the 144 latest consents are lawful use certificates for residential caravans that have been in situ for at least 10 years (to gain the lawful use) at Minorca Lane, issued as part of the planning regularisation of that community; so although they are new consents from a planning perspective, they are not really new houses. These still form part of the planning figures but the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has taken this information into account when making decisions about housing need in the Neighbourhood Plan for Roche.

Therefore the number of new homes completed or permitted so far in the new draft Cornwall Local Plan period is taken for the Neighbourhood Plan purposes as 277. This is still 67 in excess of the calculated pro-rata share for Roche above.

On this basis, avoiding a freeze of housing in the Parish so that further needs are met, the decision was taken by the Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to commit to allocations for up to 50 more homes in the Neighbourhood Plan period (revised down from 60 in the earlier consultations in recognition of further completions and permissions since the September 2014 figure).

This means that taking completions and permissions to November 2015, and the allocations proposed in this plan (sites A, B and C below – policy A1), the Neighbourhood Plan proposes allocations that will allow the Parish to deliver 327 homes (discounting the lawful use certificates) in the draft Cornwall Local Plan period to 2030, compared to its 210 pro rata share. In addition, Policy B1 and B2 make a further ***conditional*** allocation for 150 homes, and we expect continued low levels of ‘windfall’ permissions in addition.

## POLICY A1

### Roche Village

The plan establishes a new settlement boundary for the Village of Roche (Fig. 2.1).

**i) Small scale infill development and development on previously developed land within the settlement boundary will be supported where such development conforms with other policies in this Plan;**

**ii) Development of Sites A, B and C will only be supported provided that:**

**a) Site A: The proposal comprises 100% serviced self-build plots**

**A proposal for a lesser percentage of self-build than 100% will only be supported if it is demonstrated that a greater percentage is either:**

- not viable; or
- is not justified by independent market evidence

**Subject always to a requirement that any development on Site A must meet the requirements of Cornwall Council's affordable housing policies.**

**b) Site B & Site C: Any proposal should include at least 20% serviced self-build plots and meet the requirements of Cornwall Council's affordable housing policies**

**iii) Development outside the Roche development boundary will not normally be permitted. Exceptions may be made for:**

- new agricultural worker buildings where a clear case of need has been established and subject to suitable controls for future occupancy;
- the redevelopment of existing previously developed land;
- the conversion of agricultural buildings subject to evidence that such buildings are structurally sound and capable of conversion;

- a replacement dwelling that is not materially larger than the original dwelling;
- development comprising 100% affordable housing (a lower proportion may be acceptable subject to viability considerations to meet an evidenced local need ;
- development which strictly accords with policy B2.

iv) All affordable self-build development should meet the criteria set out in Cornwall Council's Affordable Housing policy, including the requirements for future occupancy and affordability.

v) In all cases, designs of high quality and sustainability that enhance their setting and reflect the principles of the Roche Parish Design Guide will be required.

vi) In the case of Sites B and C, each site should be developed in two equal phases, the second phase commencing only after the completion of the market housing built in phase 1.

#### Policy Justification

The development boundary (Fig. 2.1 overleaf) is based on the boundary established by the former Restormel Borough Council but incorporating the allocation of Sites A,B and C sufficient for around 50 further homes covering the draft Cornwall Local Plan period 2010 - 2030.

The new sites allocated in this plan are considered the most sustainable due to proximity to local services, and were preferred in the community consultation over alternative locations. The sites themselves are available and developable, with the land owners indicating that they would wish to bring them forward in whatever form and timing is proposed by the Neighbourhood Plan.

These sites are supported by the Sustainability Appraisal and the Strategic Environmental Assessment carried out for the Neighbourhood Plan by AECOM.

Alternative sites were considered around the Village, including all those put forward to Cornwall Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Appraisal. Those land owners were contacted, the Neighbourhood Plan process and our thinking explained, and opportunity given to make representations. The sites were also consulted with the local community. The selected sites were considered the most sustainable, as well as receiving community support.

- 78% believe Sites B and C are natural village locations for growth of Roche Village.
- Of the sites proposed in the SHLAA, Site A was both the most popular site and the least unpopular site.
- In the final consultation survey, asked if residents supported limiting new allocation to Sites A, B and C 95% of 354 respondents agreed.
- In the final consultation survey, 95% supported the proposition that development outside the defined boundary (including the allocated sites) should be limited to brownfield and natural infill sites.

It should be noted that the Parish has a history of small infill development (single properties, renovations, conversions) and we expect that to add a small number of further homes in the plan period, typically a handful each year, and this is reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan policy.

As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan ensures sufficient plots are available to more than meet the Parish's share of the housing numbers for the clay communities in the draft Cornwall Local Plan as set out above.

The policy states the larger sites (B and C) should be developed in two phases over the plan period, to ensure a supply of new homes through the plan period.

The policy supports a substantial proportion of self-build plots. We received strong support for self-build plots as these provide an

affordable route onto the housing ladder – in the January 2015 community survey 77% (231) felt that land should be provided for self-build plots.

This is a greater priority locally than social rented housing, since our evidence was that although there is a waiting list existing stock turnover broadly meets local demand, and recently built affordable homes have struggled to find local tenants. Ocean Housing (the largest local Housing Association) explicitly told us they do not wish to pursue affordable developments in Roche due to low demand (notwithstanding the numbers on the housing needs register). Similarly, Cornwall Council told us they no longer wished to promote their SHLAA site in Roche for affordable housing.

In all cases, people told us that development should only be supported if it is of high quality and sustainable design that enhances Roche, so development should be in accordance with Roche Parish Design Guide.

Development outside the settlement boundary is against policy (subject to policies B2 and C2 below which provide for additional development contingent on achieving new road links mitigating through traffic on the B3274). This policy implements the clear outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan consultations that development should be focused on the main settlements of Roche and Victoria, and recommendation 10 of the Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative Report (2005) which recommended limiting or restricting development beyond the development boundary of Roche Village.

Roche Parish contains largely unspoilt rural and heritage landscapes and hamlets, and various individual and small groups of rural buildings of often high quality and/or historic interest. Protection and improvement of these assets was an important priority for residents responding to the Roche Neighbourhood Plan consultations.

## POLICY A2

### Treaise/Higher Treaise

**Development (including infill development) along Treaise/Higher Treaise, is not supported (Fig. 2.2)**

#### Policy Justification

In the absence of either a full A30-St. Austell link road west of Roche or a short section achieving an HGV diversion (see policy B1), the experience of current traffic problems makes it clear that no further built development should be allowed to feed onto the Treaise/Higher Treaise Road. This was the strong view of local residents in the Neighbourhood Plan community consultations.

- 75% said there should be no more development along Treaise Road due to traffic issues.

In light of these traffic safety concerns on the main road through Treaise/Higher Treaise, and the lack of safe pedestrian pavements fully linking to Roche Village and the facilities and School there, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group concluded that no further development should be permitted along this route.

If a new St. Austell-A30 link road is established west of Roche bypassing Treaise/Higher Treaise, this policy should be reviewed, to see if there are opportunities to strengthen the sustainability of this community through development which could enable for example improved pedestrian links to Roche Village and/or improved community services for Treaise residents.



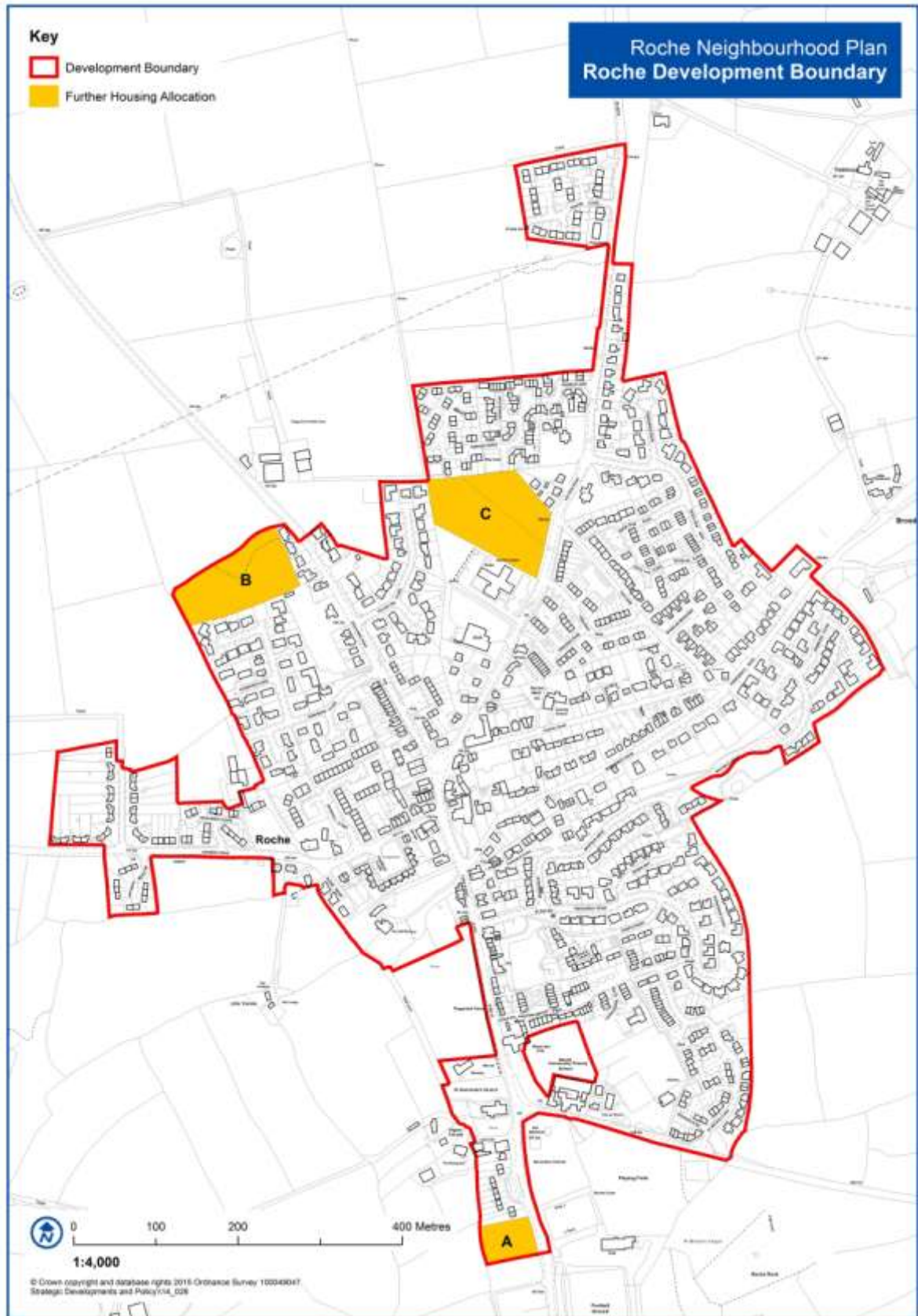
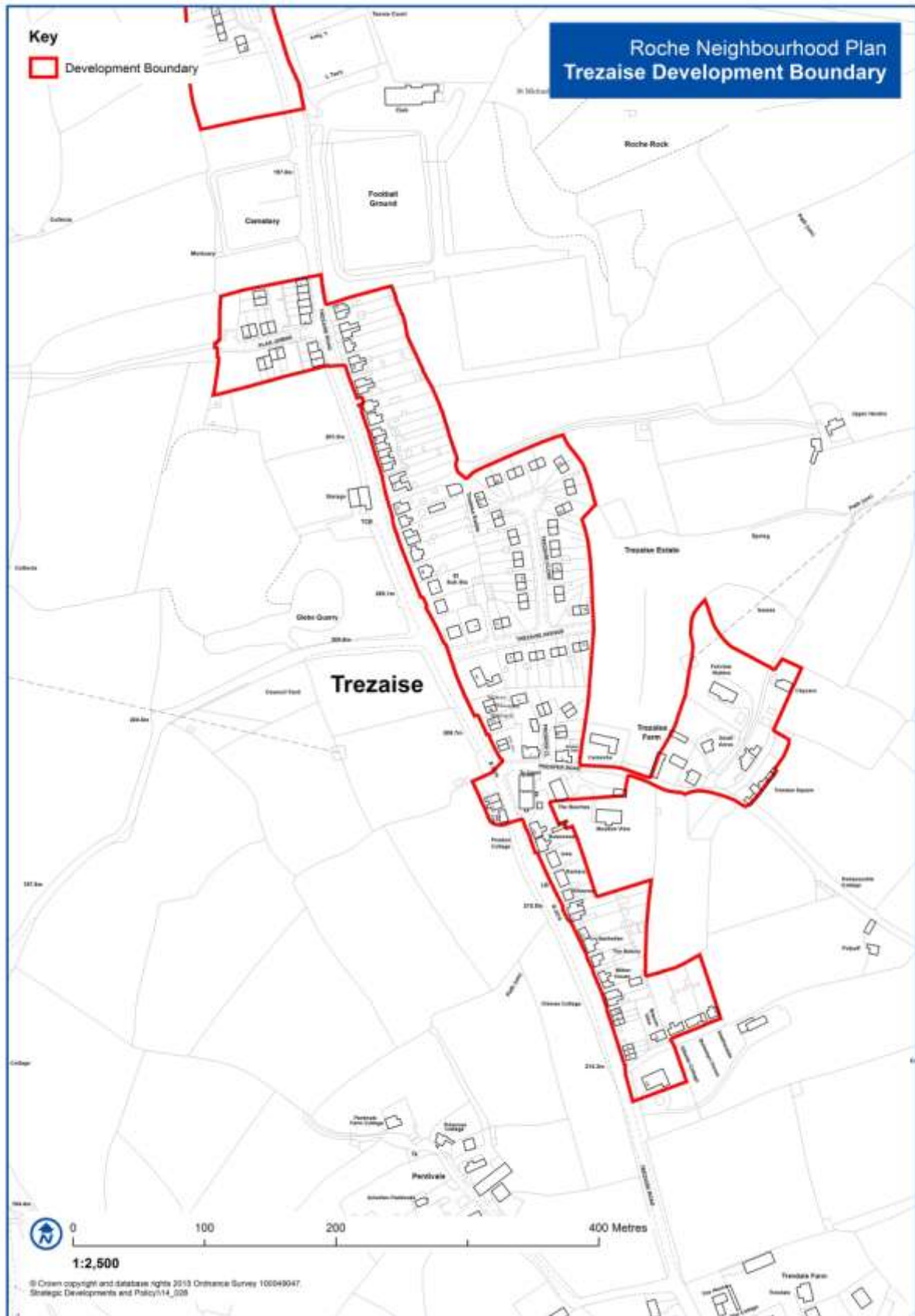


Figure 2.1 - New Roche settlement boundary and suggested housing allocations



**Figure 2.2 - Trezaise and Higher Trezaise - No development will be allowed within the settlement boundary**

## POLICY A3

### School places

**Residential development proposals, including on allocated sites, must demonstrate that suitable school places are available at Roche Village School to accommodate any increased need generated by that residential development, and, if necessary make a suitable contribution to create sufficient capacity within existing schools to accommodate the need generated by the development.**

#### Policy Justification

A substantial level of concern was expressed throughout the Neighbourhood Plan consultations about the shortage of places at Roche School. Rapid development in the Village, much of it near the School, has led to siblings of pupils already at the School but who live on the northern side of the Village (a little further from the school than the recently developed housing), being unable to secure places and therefore having to be taxied to other schools in the area. Currently the School limits its classes to 30 (to support its successful turnaround from special measure over the last few years), with one class per academic year.

The School could consider larger class sizes, but development on the scale proposed in the draft Cornwall Local Plan could still lead to capacity being exceeded. There is space to potentially add class rooms, and this could address the issue of meeting rising needs caused by further development. It is also possible that recent rapid housing growth has caused a 'bump' in pupil numbers that may subside. It was clear however that the community is concerned that further development should not prejudice places for local children and therefore the impact of further development on the need for school places at Roche School would need to be assessed, and a suitable contribution secured to meeting any unmet need for school places.

In the consultation exercise respondents noted that if more homes are needed to se-

cure a bypass (policies B1 and B2), 87% consider that there must also be a plan for places at the school to meet the needs arising from such development.

## B: TRAFFIC ISSUES

Community consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan clearly showed that solving the issues caused by heavy traffic through Roche Village and Trezaise is the greatest concern for residents of Roche Parish.

Achieving a good quality link road between the A30 and St. Austell is also a priority for Cornwall Council, and during the Neighbourhood Plan process the Council initiated a Route Options Appraisal. It is now developing this into an Outline Business Case for submission to the Department of Transport in 2017. A preferred route status will follow public consultation to be held on two route options in Summer 2016. One of these routes is just west of Roche, the other east of Bugle.

Absent such a new route west of Roche being achieved (or as a first stage in achieving it), the Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group also explored the possibility of achieving an HGV diversion if a short section of new road is built between Harmony Road and Edgumbe Road.

We explored this in detail with Cornwall Council, who conducted their own study with this option as part of their research into possible link roads. They concluded that this HGV diversion was achievable, and could achieve a reduction in HGV traffic through Trezaise and Roche Village provided it was accompanied by sufficient traffic calming measures on the old route through Roche Village to make the through route sufficiently unattractive.

Community consultation by the Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group clearly evidenced very strong community support for both these road options, and for supporting them through allocating additional housing and supporting extension of the Business Park at Victoria, provided any further housing is contingent on the road being achieved, there

are sufficient school places, it is a high quality low-density design, there is adequate provision for children's play within the development area (D), and a boundary treatment and/or trees is achieved to provide road noise reduction for residents.

Absent either the full A30-St. Austell link road (policy B1) or a short section achieving an HGV diversion, the evidence of traffic problems and the clear views of the community made it clear that no further housing allocation (beyond the specific allocations in Policy A1) should be supported in Victoria, Roche Village or Trezaise/Higher Trezaise Road, so as to avoid worsening the existing traffic issues.

It is therefore intended that residential development should contribute to this necessary road infrastructure and that the extent of affordable delivery is subordinate to delivery of the new road link.

## POLICY B1

### Link Road west of Roche

#### A30 - St. Austell link

This plan supports the principle of an A30-St. Austell link road west of Roche as a priority, in order to relieve traffic issues impacting Higher Trezaise, Trezaise, the Village of Roche, and Victoria Road. The promotion of this scheme by Cornwall Council will be a material consideration in the determination of any application along the likely route.

Support for a link road is subject to the following conditions:

a) The new road scheme is anticipated to include an HGV diversion banning HGV movements through Roche Village from the Combellack turning off Trezaise Road to the south of Roche Village, and from the Victoria Rail bridge north of Roche, and into the Village from Harmony Road east of the new road, and into Edgcumbe Road south of the new road. HGVs are to be directed instead onto the new link road.

b) Measures designed appropriately to the historic context would be taken as part of the new road scheme to improve the central areas of Roche Village and to prioritise pedestrians, make increased on street short term parking available for shoppers, improve the quality of the environment and in so doing deter "rat-running" through Higher Trezaise, Trezaise, the Village of Roche, and Victoria Road.

c) Unless it is demonstrably impracticable, that a footpath is established along Victoria Road as part of the new road scheme so as to provide safe pedestrian access between Roche Village and the railway station/employment at Victoria; and

d) That the scheme will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally important wildlife sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

#### Harmony Road to Edgcumbe Road Link

In the absence of a proposal for a full A30-St Austell link road, this plan supports the principle of the delivery of a new road linking Harmony Road to Edgcumbe Road north of the settlement boundary to address the traffic issues in Roche. Proposals for residential development in excess of 5 units within this plan area will be required to make a proportionate contribution to cost of the delivery of the Harmony Road to Edgcumbe Road link road (or in the alternative the A30-St Austell Link Road if it can be demonstrated that A30-St Austell link is committed and a contribution to its cost has been secured). Condition d) above, *that the scheme will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally important wildlife sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects*, will apply for this partial link in addition to the full link road.

#### Policy Justification

Our evidence is that the dominance of traffic through Trezaise/Higher Trezaise, Roche Village and Victoria Road is the number one is-



sue for residents. This policy supports measures to tackle these issues.

In addition, Cornwall Council has a long standing policy to achieve an improved A30-St. Austell link road, which this Neighbourhood Plan supports. During the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, Cornwall Council carried out a study to determine possible routes for this link. The study suggested a route west of Roche Village provides the most viable and cost-effective solution to achieve this link, and would also allow through traffic to be diverted around Roche Village and Trezaise.

Cornwall Council is now carrying out a detailed investigation of this route and an alternative preparatory to a possible funding bid. The Neighbourhood Plan supports this route in principle, based on the substantial support for it shown in our public consultation and the clear benefits to the Parish:

- 82% supported the proposal to get HGVs out of Trezaise and Roche
- 93% (278) believe that pavement improvements should be a requirement for developers.
- 87% (259) thought an A30-St Austell link road should be supported to reduce traffic through Roche.
- 79% (234) felt that improvements to Roche centre should be made to make it more pedestrian friendly rather than prioritising traffic.
- In the final consultation response 92% supported housing at Site D contingent on a road link easing traffic out of Roche, to support achieving the link road options.

However, if either this link road/HGV diversion or the full A30-St. Austell link road route is implemented by Cornwall Council, it is important that either is accompanied by measures to deter rat-running through Roche and Bugle by traffic calming, pedestrian prioritisation, improving the Village centre and creating a safe, HGV free pedestrian link between Roche Village and Victoria. These measures

were all strongly supported in the Neighbourhood Plan community consultations. Therefore, any new road scheme must address the issue of traffic moving through the Village by incorporating the following:

- an HGV diversion banning HGV movements through Roche Village from the Combellack turning off Trezaise Road to the south of Roche Village, and from the Victoria Rail bridge north of Roche, and into the Village from Harmony Road east of the new road, and into Edgcumbe Road south of the new road. HGVs to be directed instead onto the new link road
- Measures would be taken as part of the new road scheme to improve the central areas of Roche Village to prioritise pedestrians, make increased short term parking available for shoppers, and improve the quality of the environment and in so doing deter rat-running through Higher Trezaise, Trezaise, the Village of Roche, and Victoria Road
- Where reasonably practicable, that a footpath is established along Victoria Road as part of the new road scheme to provide safe pedestrian access between Roche Village and the railway station/ employment at Victoria

At this stage, the actual route of the link road is not determined and alternatives are still being investigated. In the process of further developing the scheme and a final alignment there will be many factors to take into consideration and this is primarily a matter for the highways authority.

Opportunities to keep new sections of link road more than 200m from any internationally important wildlife sites should be investigated. Where that is not possible (and for all stretches that are existing highway within 200m of the SAC) proposals will be supported if the scheme promoters have followed Department for Transport and Environment Agency/ Natural England guidance in investigating transport flows and air quality impacts.



This involves air quality assessment to determine whether the scheme would result in an increase in NO<sub>x</sub> concentrations or nitrogen deposition rates on all European sites within 200m, and demonstration that:

- It will not lead to an increase equivalent to more than 1% of the critical load/level<sup>1</sup> for the most sensitive habitat; or
- The combined background and additional deposition/concentrations will not exceed 70% of the critical load/level for the most sensitive habitat; or
- The increase in deposition will exceed these thresholds but will not result in an adverse effect on the habitats in question.

The final scheme should fully investigate potential for impacts via surface run-off and salt spray associated with new section(s) of road and the final alignment for new (or widened/realigned) sections of road should be chosen accordingly. The final scheme should not result in any proposals for landtake from the SAC.

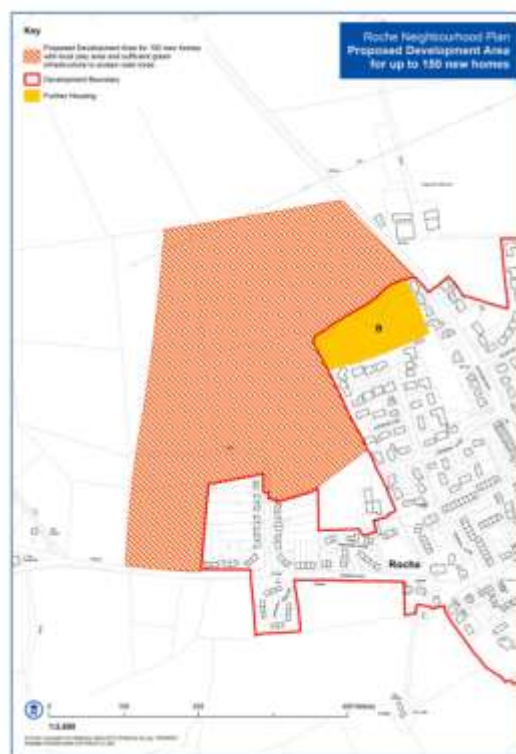
Proposals for a new St. Austell Link Road or HGV diversion should be accompanied by a fully integrated review of existing policies of traffic and traffic management measures and produce design guidance specific to the B3274 in its passage through the Village, based on a detailed audit of surrounding landscapes, wildlife habitats, buildings, materials and streetscape and a high quality approach to enhancement and improvement of streetscape; any scheme to be thoroughly grounded on the creation of a street and a sense of place rather than the mere exigencies of traffic management. This should concentrate restoration/enhancement schemes on some of Roche's important focal points, particularly the area around the Victoria Road/Harmony Road/Edgcumbe Road/Fore

Street junction, Fore Street, the Churchtown, and at gateway points such as the (Churchtown Roundabout/ Harmony Road/Chapel Road/Tremodrett Road junction).

This design guidance should help to enhance the special character of Roche, and promote transformational change that will assist a pedestrian friendly environment in Roche Village and Trezaise; and assist in discouraging traffic/HGVs 'rat-running through the Village', ensuring any investment in an alternative route achieves the objective of relieving the traffic issues through Trezaise/Higher Trezaise, Roche Village and Victoria Road.

## POLICY B2

### Potential development of Site D



**Figure 2.3 - Site D: Potential development area, local play area and sufficient green infrastructure to screen road noise**

**Development of Site D (Fig. 2.3), will only be supported for a low density development of up to 150 houses which includes an equipped local play area, provision of open,**

<sup>1</sup> The critical load or level being the threshold below which there is a very high degree of confidence that no effect would arise

natural space and sufficient Cornish Hedges and tree cover along the road, provided that any planning permission results in either:

- i) A proportionate contribution to the delivery of the A30-St Austell link road west of Roche (including appropriate means to prevent through traffic passing through Roche Village) if it can be demonstrated that an A30-St Austell link road is committed to and a contribution to its cost has been secured, and there is a reasonable prospect of its delivery; or alternatively
- ii) An enforceable contract for the construction of the new link road has been agreed by Cornwall Council for the delivery of the Harmony Road to Edgcumbe Road link.

In either event support for the contingent allocation is subject to the following conditions:

- a) Upon opening of the new road HGV movements will be prevented through Roche Village from the Combellack turning off Trezaise Road to the south of Roche Village, and from the Victoria Rail bridge north of Roche, and into the Village from Harmony Road east of the new road, and into Edgcumbe Road south of the new road. No more than 50 new homes in this contingent allocation can be occupied until: the new road has been completed and the HGV diversion established.
- b) Street works and traffic calming to support the HGV ban from Trezaise Road, Roche Village centre and Victoria Road are completed (subject to criterion a))
- c) Unless impracticable, a safe pedestrian route is established along Victoria Road linking Roche Village to Victoria
- d) A children's play area and open, natural public space is included in the new development;
- e) That the scheme will not result in an

adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally important wildlife sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

- g) Clear demonstration that any adverse environmental effects on residential amenity, especially noise, have been satisfactorily mitigated.

The costs of meeting the above requirements will be taken into account in determining S106 contributions from the 150 home contingent allocation, the extent of affordable delivery shall be treated as being subordinate to the delivery of the new road link in any assessment of viability.

#### Policy Justification

Our evidence is that the dominance of traffic through Trezaise/Higher Trezaise, Roche Village and Victoria Road is of greatest concern for residents. This policy supports measures to tackle these issues.

Currently Roche forms part of the main Newquay-St. Austell traffic route, receives Whitemoor/St.Dennis/western China Clay-A30 HGV traffic diverted away from St. Dennis, and receives A30-St. Austell traffic. The most recent traffic survey shows an average of one HGV through the Village every minute 7am to 7pm. This seriously detracts from the quality of the environment within the centre of the Village and has a consequent impact upon the quality of life of residents. Achieving a solution to the traffic issues, especially HGVs, is the first priority of the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy B2 is designed to help enable such a solution.

The Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group explored a number of options for taking the HGV traffic around Roche. The best outcome would be achieved by the new St. Austell-A30 Link Road being considered currently by Cornwall Council, if it takes the route option west of Roche.

Alternatively Cornwall Council confirmed a new link road between Harmony Road and Edgcumbe Road could allow an effective HGV

diversion, subject to sufficient suitable traffic calming in the centre of the Village, together with advanced signage etc to deter HGVs from the Village.

Our proposal is therefore to support the economics of either route option by allocating a proportion of the area between Harmony Road to Edgcumbe Road for housing, conditional on:

- a) achieving one of the two route options,
- b) the HGV diversion made,
- c) sufficient traffic calming being in place to deter rat-running.
- d) sufficient places being made available at Roche School to meet increased demand arising from the development through a contribution to meet any new increased provision required as a result of the development.

The Neighbourhood Plan is clear that the justification for this additional contingent housing allocation is solely on the basis that it secures the means of delivery of a new road, which allows HGV traffic to be diverted around Roche Village and Trezaise as otherwise the development is not sustainable and so would not be acceptable. An area of land between the development and the new road will need to be landscaped to mitigate traffic noise and provide significant new community open space for recreation and play.

The new road would divert HGVs slightly closer to Tregoss Moor which is a SAC, however our advice is that the main environmental impact of concern to the SAC is emissions. Because stop-start delays for HGVs currently travelling through Roche Village should be significantly reduced, the new route would therefore lower emissions, and thereby make a net reduction in current impacts on the SAC.

The policies have been subject to an HRA (Habitats Regulations Appraisal) screening, which concluded that a full HRA was not needed for this Neighbourhood Plan, as any decision on the road schemes would be for

Cornwall Highways (not the Neighbourhood Plan) and would be subject to HRA by Cornwall Highways.

The housing allocation (up to 150 homes) will support through contributions and economic benefits the funding required for the new road. The Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group recognise these contribution requirements could reduce the affordable housing contribution on viability grounds, though specific evidence on an 'open book' basis would be required to demonstrate this.

The development of the 150 homes should be carefully designed to avoid the impression of a single large housing estate, achieving a high quality, low density development with generous garden space and natural, open public space and well integrated development in line with the Roche Parish Design Guide.

This reflects current housing needs and complements recent new developments which have generally been high density with an over provision of affordable housing.

## C) EMPLOYMENT AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Victoria is the main employment centre in Roche Parish, and the plan proposes to support further employment growth here. Victoria sits north of the railway line and the Victoria Road rail bridge – south of which there is a distinct green gap separating it from Roche.

In contrast to Roche Village, Victoria has long been primarily a business and industrial area. The business estate is thriving, and benefits from direct access to the A30 as well as the Railway Station. Alongside are old out of town retail units along the old A30, mostly quite dilapidated and in some cases empty – these provide regeneration potential. There are however a range of community assets with the pub/hotel, cafés, petrol station, and some housing. Just down the road, the new Cornwall Services site has recently opened, adding further facilities (food outlets, coffee shop, newsagent, indoor play area and a planned hotel).

Whilst Victoria benefits from direct access to both the A30 and to rail, in contrast the road link to Roche is narrow, has a light controlled single carriageway road bridge over the railway, and has no pavement, despite currently being the HGV route to/from St. Austell and being well used by pedestrians. The traffic and pedestrian safety issues will be resolved if the new link road or the HGV diversion described in policy B1 is achieved. Without this resolution, substantive employment growth is not sustainable at Victoria if it increases traffic on Victoria Road.

Longer term there is potential for the business estate to grow in the area between the existing business estate and the new Cornwall Services (shaded orange in the attached map), provided any development does not unduly increase traffic issues on the B3274, and/or on achieving either road option set out in Policy B1. There is also potential for further mixed use development and regeneration within the existing built area (red lined in the attached map as the Victoria Development area).

Many employees at Victoria either live in Roche or use its services. However, the lack of a pavement between Victoria and Roche makes this route extremely dangerous. Any growth at Victoria must be contingent on resolving this pedestrian safety issue. Therefore expansion at Victoria must be subject to a requirement that a pavement is built along Victoria Road to link it safely to Roche for pedestrians.

The rail bridge forms a natural barrier to the south, forming the northern edge of the highly valued 'green gap' between Victoria and Roche. There was very strong support in the Neighbourhood Plan consultations for preserving this green gap.

## POLICY C1

### Employment and development

**Employment related development will be supported:**

**i) within the settlement boundary of Roche, where it results in small scale commercial development which is in keeping with its immediate context;**

**ii) in the area between the existing business park and Cornwall Services (Fig. 2.4), subject to the following conditions:**

- a) **A safe pedestrian route being established along Victoria Road to Roche;**
- b) **All new proposals for development must be accompanied by a Travel Plan to promote sustainable travel patterns**
- c) **A transport assessment of the volume of HGV traffic that is likely to be created by the new development**
- d) **Once all available land in the existing business park has been developed**

**iii) that the scheme will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally important wildlife sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.**

**The Transport assessment must show the likely routes of any additional HGV traffic travelling from or to the site. Any development which would result in increased HGV traffic through Roche/Treaise will not be supported.**

#### Policy Justification:

The Neighbourhood Plan community consultation shows support for expansion of employment at Victoria. It is well connected to the A30 and has a rail way station. However, there is also strong support for maintaining the green gap between Roche and Victoria, with no development of Victoria south of the railway line; that pedestrian safety on Victoria

road is resolved; and that development at Victoria should not increase HGV traffic through Roche Village.

## POLICY C2

### Mixed use development

**To support and safeguard strategic employment at Victoria, within the development redline mixed use development is supported (Fig. 2.4). However any residential element is subject to the following conditions:**

- a) **Change of use from an existing business use to residential will only be supported if it is clearly demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the existing business use being taken up in the foreseeable future, or alternatively that some residential is required to support a primarily business use.**
- b) **A safe pedestrian route has been established along Victoria Road to Roche;**

#### Policy Justification.

There is already a small amount of residential in addition to the business development at Victoria, and there are a railway station and other facilities including the pub and petrol station as well as the new Cornwall Services. Community surveys indicated support for limited mixed use development to support regeneration within Victoria, business growth and local employment, providing the 'green gap' between Roche and Victoria is not encroached (Policy F5, Fig. 2.9); there is no risk of generation of increased traffic thorough Roche Village; sufficient school places are available; and there is a safe pedestrian link.

Change of use from business use to residential use would not normally be supported however since this is an important business centre and opportunity for economic growth not only for the Parish, but for mid-Cornwall, and in any event Victoria is not well connected to local amenities and schools.



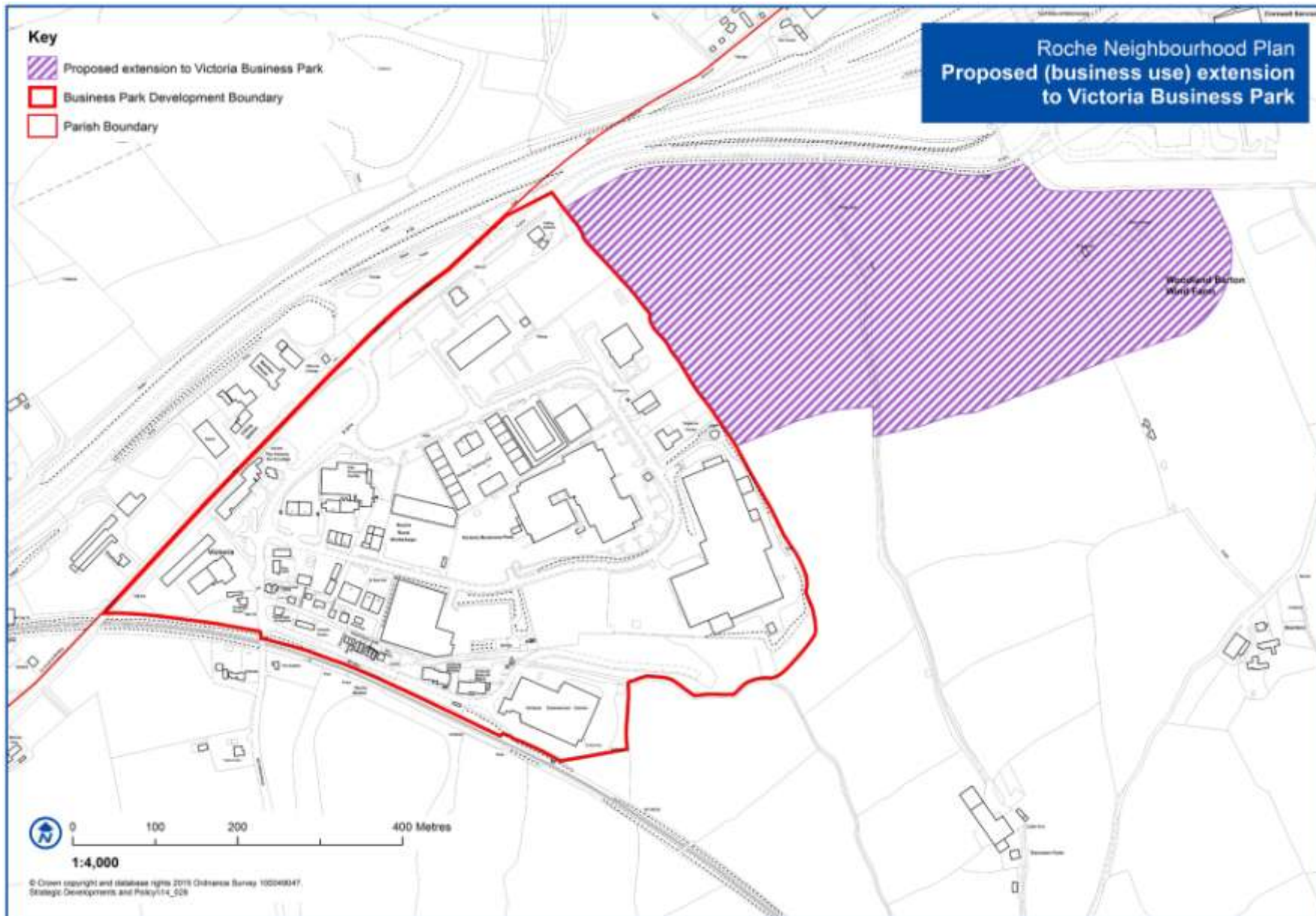


Figure 2.4 - Development between the existing business park and Cornwall Services at Victoria will be supported

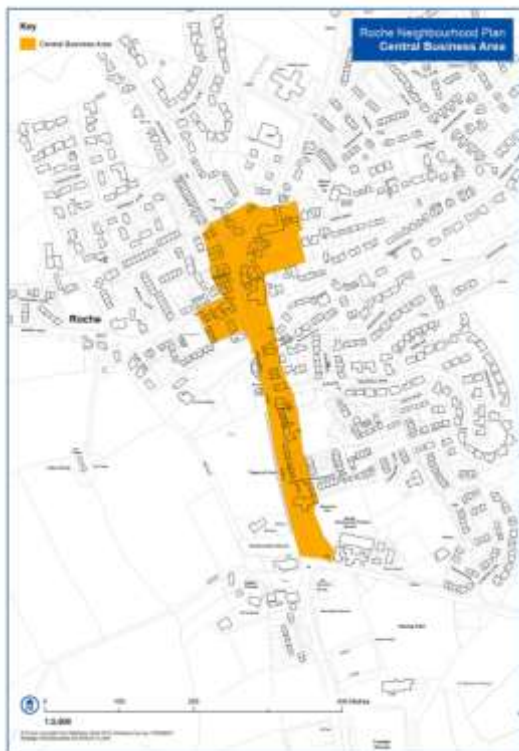
## POLICY C3

### Protection of existing business premises

#### Loss of High Street Uses

The loss of business premises used for A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 uses in the commercial area of Roche Village to other uses will not be supported unless:

- It can be demonstrated that the use of the premises for the existing or other commercial usage is no longer viable; or
- The proposed alternative use would provide equal or greater benefits for the local economy and community than the current use



**Figure 2.5 - There is clear community support for retaining shops and services in the central business district within Roche Village**

#### Policy Justification:

Roche Village benefits from a range of commercial services, especially shops and pubs and food outlets located within its central business district (Fig 2.5). The Roche

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group received clear community representations that the range of pubs and shops in the Village is of high value to the community, and should if possible be preserved, and that the character of the central square and Fore Street is also that of commercial services such as food and retail provision.

The viability of maintaining these uses must be tested, if challenged, by at least six months of marketing

- 94% (279) believe we should have policies to support keeping shops and pubs open

## POLICY C4

### Co-op car park

Development on the car park adjacent to the Co-op (as indicated in Fig. 2.6) will not be supported unless suitable alternative parking provision can be provided nearby.

#### Policy Justification

The Co-op car park provides much needed car parking for the Village centre. Loss of this facility would impact on local businesses and inconvenience residents, and on street parking is limited. Development on this site will not therefore be supported unless alternative parking can be provided nearby.

The Neighbourhood Steering Group and the Parish Council have also engaged with the Co-op regarding extending the number of parking spaces available here, which the Co-op has agreed in principle subject to funding.



**Fig. 2.6** *The Co-op car park will be retained and efforts made to increase spaces available*

## D) LOCAL GREEN SPACE DESIGNATIONS

The Neighbourhood Plan consultations showed a high importance attached to protecting significant local green spaces.

Four Local Green Space designations have been strongly supported during the Neighbourhood Plan consultations – two to preserve green spaces of historic importance that also have a history of community use and are important to the setting of the historic Village centre (the old fair ground and the glebe meadow), the third for its community recreational use and its visual relationship with Roche Rock (the play and recreation area) and the fourth for recreational use and as a nature resource (the duck pond). All are important to their setting.

In addition, there was general support for protecting and enhancing green spaces and the natural environment. Open space provision has been delivered historically without always considering potential for wider environmental benefits. A playing field or a play

park provided with new development can also provide ecological value, value to local character or connectivity to other open spaces if a joined up approach is taken. The Neighbourhood Plan is intended to encourage and enable such a joined up approach.

## POLICY D1

### Local Green Space designations

**Built development on land which has been identified as Local Green Space will be resisted unless it small scale and is incidental to the use of the land as green space, other than in very special circumstances..**

#### **Policy D1(a): Local Green Space designation The Old Fairground (Fig 2.7)**

##### Policy Justification:

The Old Fair Ground on the north west corner of the school grounds was donated for use as a nature area by the School. It is now used as such. Both for its original historic significance and to protect its new community educational use against possible development, its designation as a Local Green Space is recommended. 92% of survey responses supported this designation, as did the School.

#### **Policy D1(b): Local Green Space designation - The Glebe Meadow (Fig 2.7)**

##### Policy Justification:

The Glebe Meadow is part of an 1820's designed landscape between the church and the Old Rectory, bordered by a planted 'Avenue' and a Ha-Ha, and recommended for protection by the Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative (an initiative by English Heritage, the then Cornwall County Council and the former Restormel Borough Council) as locally and regionally important. Historically it has been used for community events and clubs including church fetes, community fairs and dances, and community sports such as the tug-of-war team. Unlike agricultural land around Roche it is undisturbed or semi-disturbed grass land and therefore of ecological value, and contains a listed Celtic cross. Its designation as a Local Green Space was supported by a Village

petition of 260 residents, and 90% support in the Neighbourhood Plan surveys, as well as the CISI recommendations

**Policy D1(c): Local Green Space designation - The play and recreation area (Fig. 2.7)**

Policy Justification:

Roche has a substantial recreation asset, with the play area, tennis courts, cricket pitch and football fields and training area. Located west of Roche Rock, this area is not only of huge recreational value, but any development here would also be of significant detrimental visual impact on the setting of Roche Rock. Its designation was proposed to the Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group by local councillors and members of the Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

**Policy D1(d): Local Green Space designation - The duck pond and surrounding green space (Fig. 2.7)**

Policy Justification:

The duck pond is in part a flood attenuation pond, but also provides an important local recreational and nature resource. Its retention, including the surrounding green space (which has in the past been subject to development proposals which have been refused) - is important for its amenity value to the community, as well as the pond's drainage management role. The Roche Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group received community representations for its protection.

**Cornwall Council, Natural England and other organisations locally.**

Justification

The delivery of new and improved green infrastructure provision is most effective when it is planned through a partnership approach. This helps ensure that the full range of benefits from a high quality green infrastructure network can be realised, including (but not limited to) improvements to recreational offer, enhancements to landscape and streetscape character, the protection and enrichment of the historic environment, climate change mitigation and adaptation and enhancements to ecological networks.

In Roche, it is therefore anticipated that a coordinated approach will be significantly more effective in designing and managing green infrastructure as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits than a piecemeal approach.

We have used a qualitative assessment approach to green space, informed by the views of the local community. A qualitative assessment due to be conducted by Cornwall Council Open Spaces Team in Roche in 2016 should inform any review as necessary.

## POLICY D2

### A coordinated approach to green spaces

**Proposed enhancements to open space provision in Roche should be delivered through a coordinated green infrastructure approach, including in conjunction with existing green infrastructure work being undertaken by**



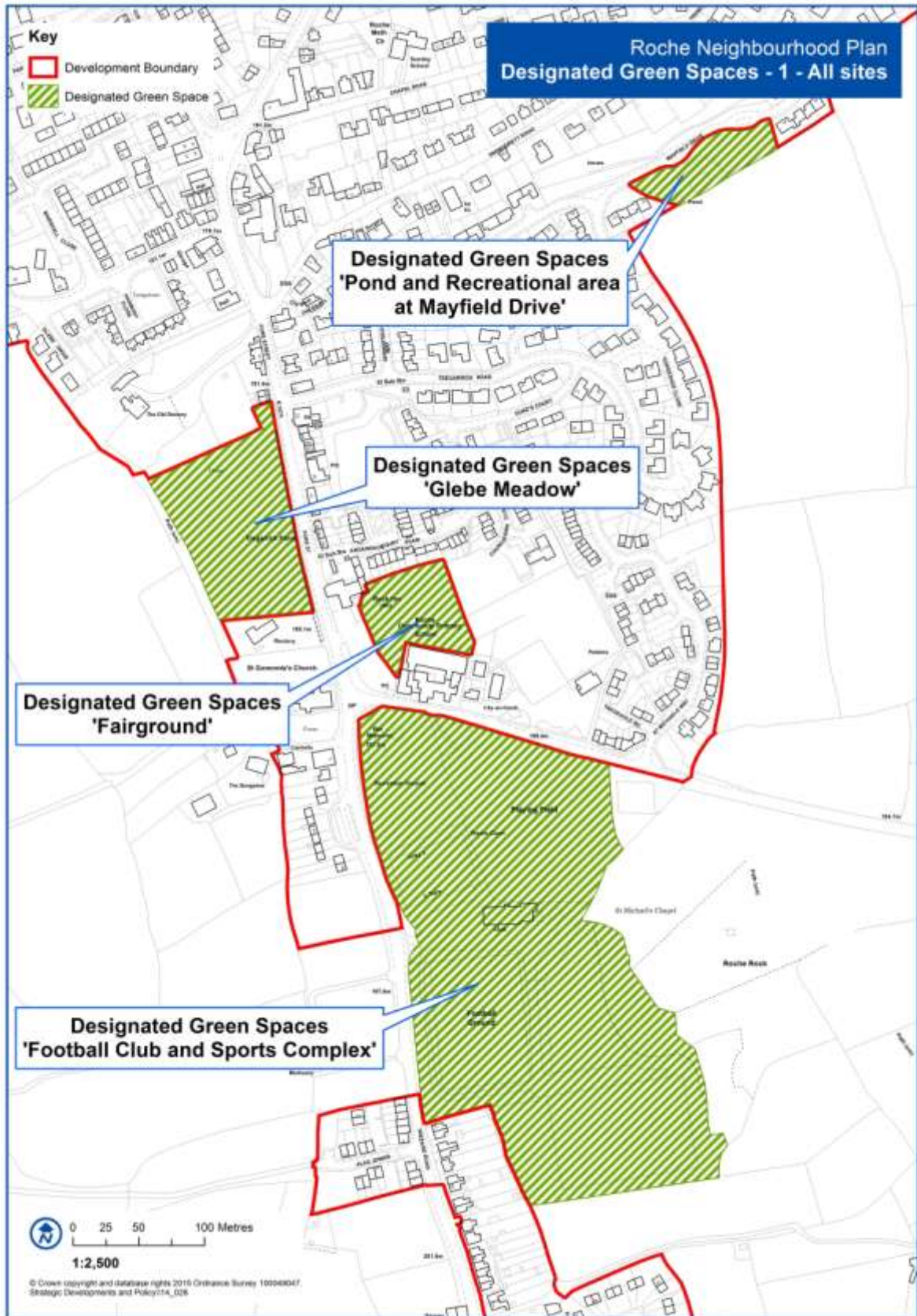


Figure 2.7 - Local Green Space designations: The Glebe Meadow, The Old Fairground and the sports and recreation areas to the west of Roche Rock



## E) RENEWABLES

### POLICY E1

#### Wind and solar farms

**In considering applications for wind farms and solar farms:**

- i) Importance will be placed on considering siting against national guidance that stresses visual impact, and particularly cumulative impact**
- ii) Wind turbines will be supported in the plan area (Fig 1.1) where impacts identified by the affected local community have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing**
- iii) Wind or solar farm applications that materially impact the setting of Roche Rock will not be supported.**

#### Policy Justification

Roche Parish has recently seen a number of wind turbines approved to the north-west of Roche Village. The wider mid-Cornwall area has seen large numbers of individual turbines approved as well as a small number of wind farms. The result is that from many vantage points multiple wind turbines can be seen scattered across the landscape.

Similar concerns were raised about the prospect of solar farms, since along main roads in Cornwall multiple solar farms have also been approved in often highly visible locations.

The community consultations that took place (prior to the Secretary of State's statement that wind turbines should not be permitted in the absence of demonstrable community support), showed strong concern about insensitive siting of wind turbines in the Parish. The new national policy makes it clear that in the absence of clear community support, wind turbine applications should not be supported.

- 95% (281) want the Neighbourhood Plan to emphasise that wind turbines

and solar farms must be sensitively sited.

National planning guidance is clear that visual impact, including cumulative impact is a material consideration, and given the wind turbines already erected in and near the Parish this will also be particularly important in considering any further applications – a view clearly held by Roche residents responding to the Neighbourhood Plan consultations.

When considering the sensitivity of the landscape to further renewable energy development, the document 'Judging Landscape Capacity – A development management Toolkit', as adopted by Cornwall Council will be used to assess development.

More specifically, the setting of Roche Rock is particularly sensitive and proposals that impact on its setting would not be acceptable in any event.

## F) HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The Neighbourhood Plan evidenced strong support for protecting the historic environment of the Parish

- 93% (281) want policies to protect traditional hedges, meadows and woodland
- 94% (282) agreed conservation policies should be adopted to protect traditional features.
- 89% (263) thought new developments should not encroach on Roche Rock.

In 2005 a comprehensive report into Roche Village was published through the Cornwall Industrial Settlement Initiative (CISI), jointly commissioned by English Heritage, the then Cornwall County Council and the former Restormel Borough Council.

The meticulously researched report forms part of Cornwall Council's evidence base, but it is not clear it has fully informed subsequent planning decisions. This may be in part be-

cause action on the CISI recommendations were eclipsed by the subsequent merger of the councils. The report has been used to inform the Roche Parish Neighbourhood Plan however, and the Plan formalises a number of historic environment policies based on the recommendations and evidence base of that Report.

In order to enhance the evidence base behind this Plan, to aid the process of assessment required by these Policies, and in order to give certainty and reduce risk to future development proposals, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has also recommended the Parish Council seeks the designation of a conservation area, if deemed appropriate, together with revision of national designations, and /or development of a list of locally significant buildings and sites.

## POLICY F1

### Assessment of historic assets

**As part of any development or management proposal, applications should provide a proportionate assessment of the significance of any historic assets affected by the proposals, designated or otherwise, including buildings, landscapes, archaeological features or areas of locally distinctive character, and including any contribution made by their setting.**

**Assessments should be detailed enough to show how the proposal will affect that significance (positively or negatively) with, if necessary, an explanation of the public benefits of the proposal. Proposals will be determined in line with statutory requirements, national policy guidance and relevant specific guidance, principles and best practice.**

#### Policy Justification:

To ensure decision making is based on sound evidence, is appropriate to the importance of the site, to ensure the preservation and enhancement of locally distinctive character and historic assets, but not to be over-

burdensome on smaller applications in less sensitive areas.

The principle will be that the more important the asset, the more assessment would be required. Assessments should, where relevant, utilise the existing available evidence base, particularly the Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record, the 2005 CISI report and other relevant studies and locally specific guidance such as the *Guidance for Methodist and Nonconformist Chapels in Cornwall*, as well as national guidance, such as Historic England publications (e.g. on types of heritage assets, but also on principles and best practice, as in the relevant *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes or Conservation Principles*).

In those, probably rare, cases where there is likely to be a substantial degree of harm to historic assets of demonstrable importance, more detailed assessment may be required to include:

- Desk Based Assessment
- Historic building assessments/ archaeological trial trenching etc. where appropriate
- Historic Area Impact Assessment
- Assessment of impact on setting, context and inter-relationship of heritage assets/historic townscapes or landscapes
- Mitigation to include appropriate design responding to historic context; historic building recording; archaeological assessments/watching briefs/targeted excavation/recording etc. as appropriate

## POLICY F2

### Area of special architectural and historic interest

**Within the historic areas of Roche Village (the area in Fig. 2.8) development proposals must demonstrate that the proposed devel-**

opment is consistent with the locally distinctive character of the Village. Proposals that result in substantial harm to the character of

the area identified in Fig. 2.8 as a locally significant area of special architectural and historic interest will be resisted.

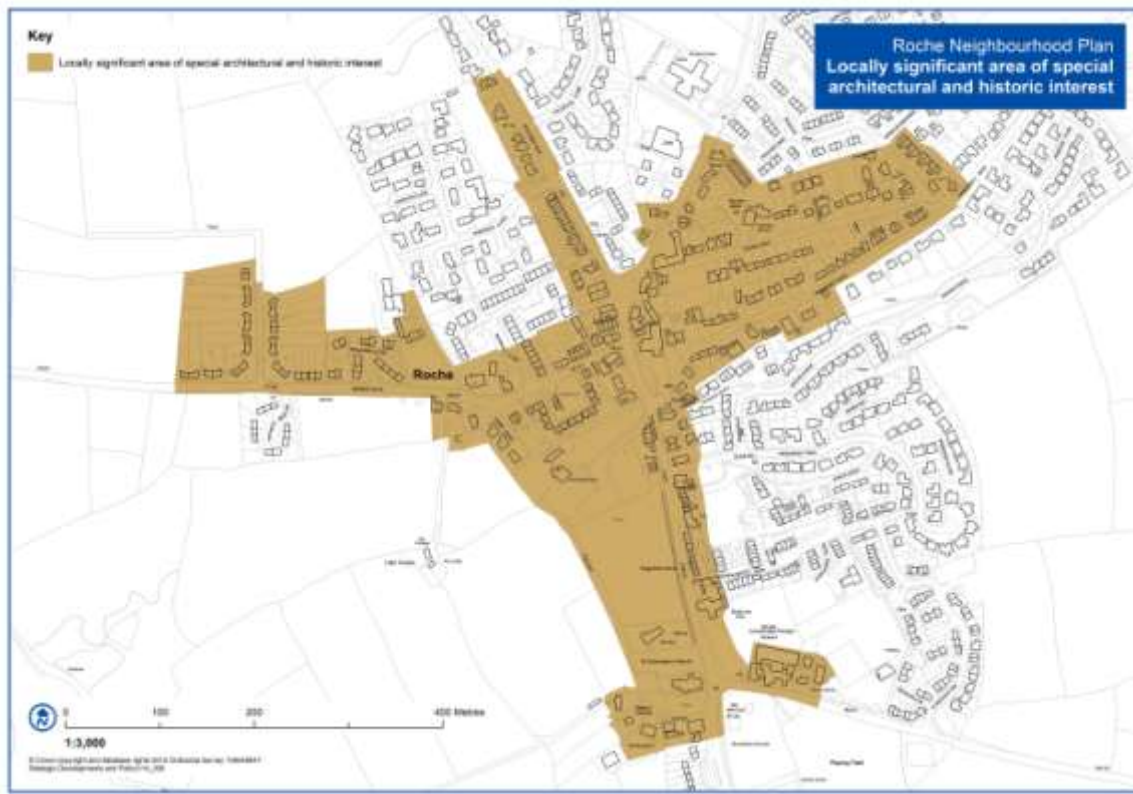


Figure 2.8 - Locally significant area of architectural and historic significance.

Policy Justification:

In the Neighbourhood Plan consultation there was strong support for protecting and enhancing the historic character of the older areas of the Village. This support is underpinned by Recommendation I of the CISI report, which proposed the designation of a conservation area “replacing and extending the existing area of local architectural and historic character”; the analysis in the CISI report should be the basis for understanding the locally treasured character of the Village. Policy F2 recognises the important areas of special architectural and historic importance in Roche to promote the preservation and enhancement of those areas. These areas are within the ‘area of special architectural and/or historic interest’ in the proposals map Fig. 2.8

**POLICY F3**

**Protecting local character**

**Development will be refused in the following open areas that contribute to local character:**

- a) All areas designated as Community Open Space;
- b) Open areas around the church and around Roche Rock,
- c) Development proposals that would impact on the open moorland setting of, and views into and from Roche Rock from the Village of Roche.

Policy Justification:

To retain both the rural identity of Roche, and to manage and protect the setting of the historic Roche Village, Church and Roche Rock.

Protection of open areas had considerable support in the Neighbourhood Plan consultations, and also reflects the CISI recommendation 3, to 'Protect open areas that contribute to character'.

## POLICY F4

### Preservation of settlement boundaries

**Where new development forms an edge of any settlement boundary, such as the allocations in this Neighbourhood Plan, the proposal must be fully integrated into the historic topography and settlement form with appropriate traditional boundary treatments, and consistent with the Roche Parish Design Guide (see Appendix 1).**

#### Policy Justification

To retain both the discrete identity of Roche and the setting of Roche Rock, and comply with existing Local Plan commitments, this implements recommendation 10 of the CISI report, and reflects the strong representations made to the Neighbourhood Plan consultations about development being sensitive to the landscape and visual impacts

## POLICY F5

### Retaining community identity

**To maintain the distinct character and identities of Roche and Victoria, an area of green space between the two communities has been identified. Development proposals which would erode this open space (Fig. 2.9) will not be supported.**

#### Policy Justification

The open space between Roche and Victoria is important to mark the separation between the residential Village at Roche and the largely industrial / commercial nature of the historically separate settlement at Victoria. This policy meets the objectives of paragraphs 7 and 17 of the NPPF, relating to the protection of the natural environment and the preservation of the different roles and character

of different areas. Further development in the area identified in Fig 2.9 could further erode the Village nature of Roche.

The protection of the green gap between Roche and Victoria (bounded by the Roche development boundary to the south, and the railway line to the north) was strongly supported throughout the consultations on the Neighbourhood Plan, to protect the distinct identities of the two settlements.

- In the final consultation survey, 98% of respondents agreed with protecting the Local Green Space designations (Policy D1) and the Green Gap between Roche Village and Victoria (Policy F5).

## POLICY F6

### Designated heritage assets

**Proposals which result in substantial harm to the significance of any designated heritage assets will be resisted.**

**Where such a proposal will give rise to less than substantial harm then considerable importance will be attached to such harm, and planning permission will only be granted where the proposal is in the public interest.**

#### Policy Justification

This policy seeks to give weight to the significance of historic assets, to strengthen the statutory and national policy requirements to avoid harm or loss to designated assets, including cumulative impacts and less than substantial harm, and to require clear and convincing justification to allow the harm to be balanced against any public benefits of a proposal.



Figure 2.9 - No development will be permitted within the green gap between Victoria and Roche Village

## POLICY F7

### Non-designated heritage assets

Where development will impact upon buildings or features that are of heritage importance but not designated, then full account must be taken of any impact upon their heritage significance in determining a planning application.

#### Policy Justification:

The Roche Neighbourhood Plan consultations showed strong support for protecting these assets, and the CISI report also recommended policy should recognise the intrinsic value and importance of our historic settlements and landscapes, including the remnant medieval field systems and associated farmsteads and hamlets.

Non-designated assets of local importance include: Cornish Hedges (Fig 2.10), the remnant medieval field systems and associated farmsteads and hamlets; sites already identi-

fied in relevant studies (CISI) or in the Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record.



Figure 2.10 - Full account must be taken by potential development of the impact of non-designated heritage assets such as Cornish Hedges

## POLICY F8

### Protection of archaeological assets

Where development proposals have the potential to impact on archaeological remains (including industrial archaeology) on sites



**identified in the Appendix to the CISI report for Roche, and before any development is approved, there must be sufficient assessments and field evaluations to define the significance and scale of any potential impact.**

**Applicants should outline any mitigation measures and the steps to be taken to record, retain, incorporate, protect, enhance and where appropriate manage the archaeological interest, as part of the proposals.**

#### Policy Justification.

Roche Parish includes many areas of archaeological sensitivity, both medieval and earlier, as well as more modern industrial heritage. This policy is to ensure all proposals comply with and strengthen existing Local Plan commitments to assess the archaeological heritage of the Parish. This supports recommendation 6 of the CISI report.

## **G) NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Roche Parish contains many areas designated for their important species and habitats including those with international, national and local designations. These include part of the Breney Common Goss and Tregoss Moor (SAC); the Goss and Tregoss Moors Site of Special Scientific interest (SSSI) which cover similar areas; River Camel SAC and River Camel Valley and Tributaries SSSI (which cover similar areas); St Austell Clay Pits SAC and St Austell Clay Pits SSSI (which cover similar areas); Tregonetha & Belowda Downs - Belowda Beacon SSSI (geological designation); Roche Rock SSSI (geological designation); Hensbarrow and Criggan Moor County Wildlife Sites.

Collectively these sites contain significant tracts of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats including Lowland Heathland, Wet Woodland and Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture. There are also significant areas of non-designated semi-natural habitat, particularly to the north and east of Carbis. The Parish also contains part of the Goonbar-

row County Geology Site on its south east border. These are set out in Fig. 2.11.

Site allocations have been chosen to avoid these sensitive areas so as not to undermine the nature conservation or geodiversity conservation value of these key internationally and nationally designated sites, and where possible, seek to support enhancements.

However, even non-designated sites include habitat features that can be harmed by built development, particularly Cornish Hedges, trees and areas of scrub. Habitat features should be retained and designed into developments and opportunities to build-in enhancements for wildlife should be maximised. Some species groups are particularly vulnerable to disturbance but also can benefit from enhancements. Whilst there is existing national and local planning policy and national legislation that is relevant, this policy adds locally relevant detail to make sure wildlife habitats and species are both protected and enhanced.

## **POLICY G1**

### **Landscape**

**Development should be of a scale, mass and design that reflects local landscape character.**

**In particular development should seek to:**

- a) Maintain & restore Cornish Hedges, stone walls, hedgerows and other boundary features whilst respecting the varying pattern of ancient field systems,**
- b) Protect against insensitive development/alterations impact on rural character, ensuring that buildings reflect traditional materials and styles**
- c) Retain expansive open views from both within and out of the Roche area and views of prominent features including Roche Rock, church tower and mining features typical of the area**

**d) Preventing further visually intrusive skyline development.**

Policy Justification

It is important that development respects and seeks to enhance local landscape character and maintains local distinctiveness. Some of the key characteristics of the area are set out in the National Character Area Profile information published by Natural England and include the wild and untouched landscape of Goss Moor, ancient field patterns bounded by Cornish Hedges and the iconic granite tor of Roche Rock.

## POLICY G2

### Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity

**a) Sites of European importance**

**The highest level of protection will be given to sites of European importance and those sites which have been identified as being of potential European importance within the Parish (i.e. potential, candidate and existing Special Protection Areas, and possible, candidate and existing Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar<sup>2</sup> sites). Proposals having an adverse impact on the integrity of such sites will not be permitted other than in exceptional circumstances. Measures to avoid any adverse impacts on these sites will be sought as a first principle.**

**b) Sites of national importance**

**Sites of national importance (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) will be protected. Development having an adverse impact on these sites will not normally be permitted, other than in exceptional circumstances. Measures to avoid any adverse impacts on these sites will be sought as a first principle.**

**c) Sites and features of local importance**

**Features and locally designated sites of biological or geological interest (including Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species, and soils, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Regionally Important Geology Sites (RIGs)), will be conserved, protected and enhanced. Unavoidable impacts on such sites should be appropriately mitigated and compensated for. In particular planning applications should:**

- **provide for nesting birds, roosting bats and hedgehogs,**
- **maximise opportunities for enhancing wildlife in new areas of public open space**

Policy Justification

It is important not only to protect existing national and international designations but also to recognise the important value of other sites and connected wildlife corridors. It is also important where possible to seek to protect and enhance the natural environment whenever development takes place.

Where risk of Likely Significant Effects on internationally important wildlife sites exists, proposals will be supported when a Habitats Regulations Assessment is undertaken to demonstrate that no likely significant effects will arise. Where likely significant effects cannot be screened out, appropriate assessment will be required and, if necessary, measures to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of those sites.

This policy also reflects the importance attached to wildlife and biodiversity in the public consultations.

- 93% wanted to protect traditional hedges, meadows and woodland.

## H) DESIGN

It is important that all development in Roche Parish enhances and respects the quality of the historic environment, and maintains and enhances the sustainability of the community.

<sup>2</sup> Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

It is essential proposals are drawn up with careful consideration of local context and to achieve the highest possible design quality, clearly setting out how they will achieve this to enable informed community consultation and decision taking. The Roche Parish Design Guide (Appendix 1) is designed to supplement the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, and includes both key tasks developers need to address and background material specific to the historic areas of Roche.

The principles outlined in the Roche Parish Design Guide section should be applied to all developments across the Parish to ensure high quality, thoughtfully planned and designed developments which enhance the community.

- 92% (275) agreed the design of new homes should 'fit in'.

## POLICY H1

### Reinforcing character and heritage

**All development proposals must demonstrate how their proposed development reinforces Roche's character and heritage in a written statement. In particular the statement must set out how the proposals follow the policies and guidance in the NPPF, the Cornwall Design Guide and the Roche Parish Design Guide (and any subsequent revision to those Design Guides). Any such statement must address the following (where relevant):**

- Context and character;
- Historic character;
- Connection with the countryside;
- Quality for pedestrians;
- Cyclists and the physically disadvantaged;
- Development density and build quality;
- Car Parking;
- Landscaping and access to open and green space;

- **Occupier controlled access to fibre, copper and other home office services;**
- **Environmental footprint;**
- **The retention of locally distinctive boundary treatments and creation of these where absent.**

**These requirements apply to new commercial buildings as much as to new homes. The Parish Council reserves the right to require an individual design review on any development application.**

#### Policy Justification

High Quality design which takes full account of the best qualities of Roche Parish was strongly supported through the Neighbourhood Plan consultations, and Policy H1 helps give effect to this desire, especially when read in conjunction with the Roche Parish Design Guide (**Appendix 1**). The Roche Parish Design Guide includes a checklist for developers to complete, showing how the elements set out in Policy H1 have been considered.

- In the latest consultation, 97% of respondents agreed that all development should be high quality and designed to fit the Village and neighbouring housing.

## POLICY H2

### Ensuring the highest standards of development, protecting landscape character

Layouts for new development should be designed to the highest possible standard and protect historic and landscape character against inappropriate incremental alterations and demolition, in particular:

- a) Make sensitive use of local landscape features.
- b) Make generous provision for open green spaces which are linked to the

**wider natural environment and accessible to the public.**

#### Policy Justification

High Quality design which takes full account of landscape and provides opportunities to access green space was strongly supported through the Neighbourhood Plan consultations, and Policy H2 helps give effect to this desire, especially when read in conjunction with the Roche Parish Design Guide. Good design is important in making new development acceptable for the community and therefore enabling its delivery.

## **POLICY H3**

### **Maintaining a sense of place**

**To protect the character of Roche against inappropriate incremental alterations and demolition, especially in historic areas and around historic properties**

- a) The demolition of walls and hedges, especially for the creation of hard standings, should be avoided**
- b) Demolition of freestanding outbuildings and the loss of historic features will be resisted.**

#### Policy Justification

Protecting the traditional design features and 'sense of place' in the historic areas of settlement throughout the Parish was strongly supported through the Neighbourhood Plan consultations, and Policy H3 helps give effect to this desire, especially when read in conjunction with the Roche Parish Design Guide.



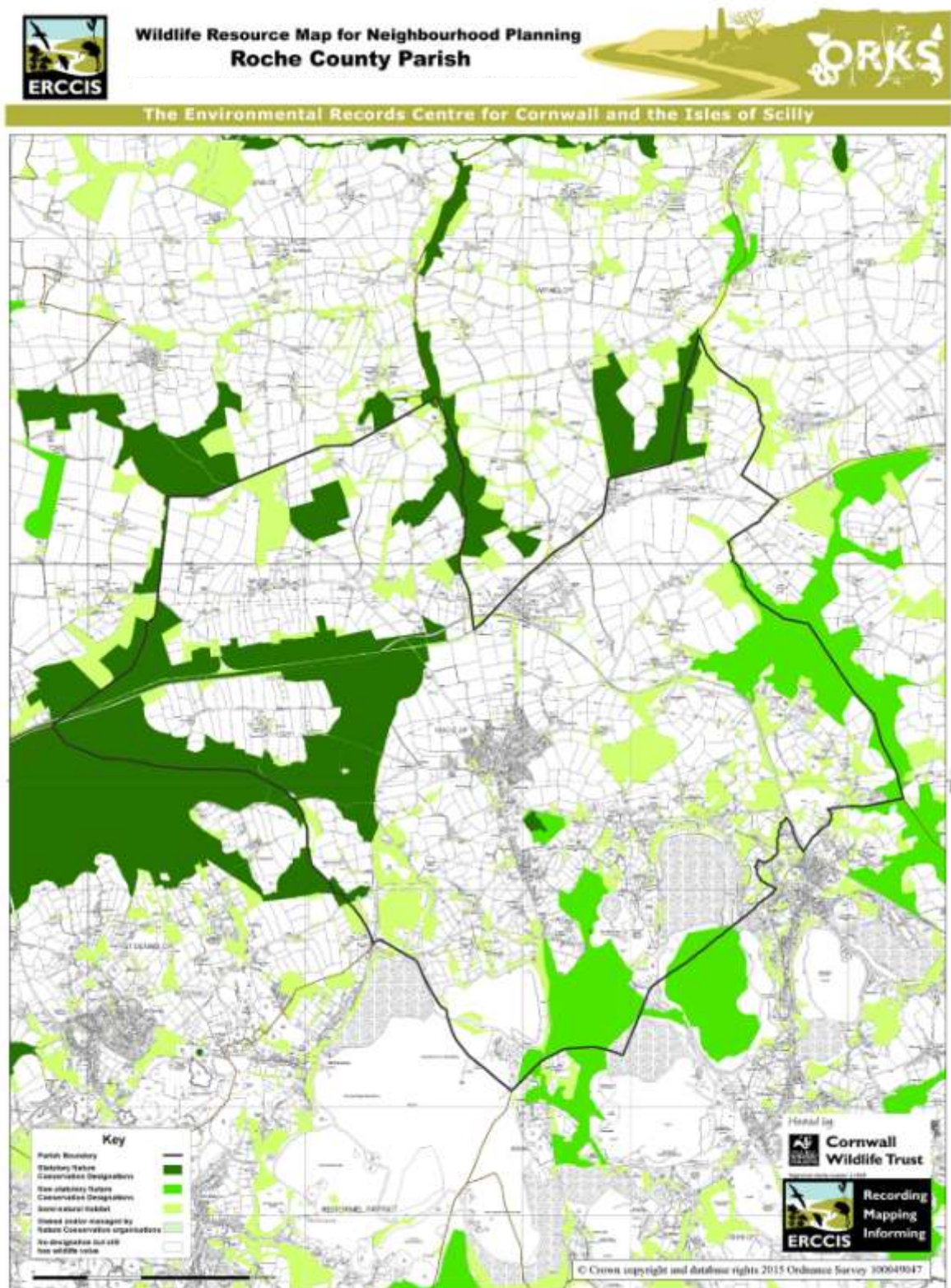


Figure 2.11 - Roche Parish Wildlife Resource Map 2015 - kindly supplied by Cornwall Wildlife Trust