

Policy Area	INFRASTRUCTURE
Policy	Protection of Commercial Premises
Issue	St Agnes Parish is distinct in having a wide range of commercial businesses, especially in the village of St Agnes. However, increasingly, these premises are being converted to dwellings.
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain a wide range of commercial outlets that will enable our villages to continue to thrive. • To reduce the reliance on car journeys in accessing day to day shops and services. • To reverse the trend of commercial space being lost to domestic use.
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community support for this objective in our recent questionnaire was 92%: <i>Q28. Should we have policies to support keeping amenities such as village shops open, rather than be converted into private homes? 91.95% replied: Yes.</i> • Commercial premises are steadily being lost: There used to be six filling stations in the Parish – there are now none. St Agnes has lost its Londis Store, Barclays Bank (the last bank in the Parish), and many other shops and commercial premises – many being converted to residential. • A study, commissioned by the Regeneration Forum, stated that 85% of the money spent by residents was spent ‘outside’ the Parish. As more business premises are lost, it becomes harder to reverse this trend. • At an NDP consultation event in May 2016, The St Agnes Chamber of Commerce expressed their support for existing and future small businesses as opposed to large ‘out of town’ shops. • The current test set out in the Cornwall Local Plan (ie. Evidence of 9 months marketing) is not robust and open to wide interpretation. • Community aspiration requires a policy that does more than merely defend against losses of premises. • The Planning Authority cannot comment on 3rd party marketing or force agents to provide information (see PA16/02792) therefore the information available to case officers is potentially deficient and open to abuse.

Policy direction	To protect and enhance the existing commercial and retail facilities in the Parish.
Policy wording	<p>Planning applications for conversion of existing commercial premises will normally be resisted. Provision of new, small commercial premises, within village settlement boundaries, or revitalising former commercial premises will be encouraged.</p> <p>Evidence of marketing supplied to the planning authority must include a list of enquiries and responses to marketing activity. Proposals for shops, financial and professional services and food and drink establishments (Use Class A) will be permitted within the parish of St. Agnes, where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) They do not individually or together with other proposals undermine the vitality of the village or villages; ii) The proposal is consistent with the scale and function of the nearest village or villages; <p>Cornwall Local Plan employment floorspace target requires St. Agnes & Perranporth CNA to provide 15167m² of office floorspace and 9333 m² of industrial floorspace.</p>
Links to other policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cornwall Local Plan, Policy 4 states: Community facilities and village shops should, wherever possible, be retained and new ones supported. Loss of provision will only be acceptable where the proposal shows: a. no need for the facility or service; b. it is not viable; or c. adequate facilities or services exist or the service can be re-provided in locations that are similarly accessible by walking, cycling or public transport. Cornwall Local Plan, Policy 5 indicates that proposals that result in the loss of business space are required to pass a number of tests including specifically i) demonstrate that there is no market demand through active and continued marketing for at least a period of 9 months, (or one of the other three tests). • The NPPF, Policy 2 Ensuring the vitality of town centres: Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality; Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
Similar policies in	Cornwall Local Plan & the NPPF (See above)
Comments	

Commented [OC1]: I think you probably need a viability clause here – if a business is no longer viable, surely conversion is better than simply being vacant? Also is there a difference between vital village services and industrial units outside the main village area?

