

Higher Newham News



Off to the veg patch

LATEST NEWS: Community farm plan goes to Cornwall Council – your views count

The partnership behind the Higher Newham Farm & Village project have just submitted a planning application for an educational community farm and village on the edge of Truro.

The application documents have been sent to Cornwall Council. Your comments can be submitted to the Council via an online form, via email or by letter by writing to your local area office or the planning department at County Hall.

You can find all the information you need about how to comment on the plans here: www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/online-planning-register

You must register as a user to comment on planning applications via the online planning register. Write to: Planning Department, Cornwall Council, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY.

Vicky Garner, local project coordinator, "These proposals have been developed by a partnership – Duchy College, Cornwall Food Foundation and Living Villages. Together and with the input of many others, we have come up with what we believe to be a unique proposal, one which puts the Higher Newham Farm & Village project into an interesting space. Looking to be part of the solution to the extremely tricky question "How do you provide much needed homes that people really want to live in, whilst also protecting much loved green space?"



The farmhouse

Farmhouse home for restaurant

Work has begun on the repair and renovation of the original farm buildings at Higher Newham.

The old farmhouse will, if plans go ahead, become home to the Cornwall Food Foundation restaurant. Surrounding buildings will be given a new lease of life as they become home to artisan makers and community space. And with stunning views of Calenick Creek too.

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HIGHER NEWHAM FETE

COME AND JOIN US ON SUNDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

We will be holding a Fete up at Higher Newham on Sunday 7 September from 11am–4pm. The event will be free to attend but will be ticketed.

For further info please go to the back page.



Artists impression of Higher Newham Village

Our vision

"We want to find the beating heart of Higher Newham, build a thriving community around it and in so doing demonstrate that it is possible, together, to make a real place that people can love, live and really be part of – where stories are made and told. We are helping people understand their opportunities in life and for living, and sowing the seeds of a community that will flourish because of its connections with the land and its produce, with the city of Truro and its people."



Our aims

1. Values

To recognise the values of local food production by creating opportunities to support and learn about all 3 stages of the food cycle (growing, cooking and eating) at local scale.

2. Careers

To recognise the need for careers in food and farming by creating a learning environment for all ages, where agricultural, horticultural and cookery skills are core.

3. Sharing ideas

To recognise that research, innovation and the sharing of ideas and information have a significant part to play in tackling the challenges facing the local farming community.

4. Local housing

To respond to the need for good quality local housing by creating opportunities for a village to thrive.

5. Green space

To respond to the importance of accessible green space by creating new landscapes whose protection is enhanced for future generations.



Artists impression of Higher Newham Village



Affordable homes

The story behind the design

Why do our plans look the way they look?
 Why is the village where it is?
 What's the thinking behind the layout of the farm?
 We explain here.



1 Because the southern part of Higher Newham is close to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the decision was made early on to make the southern slopes of the site complement the natural environment. They became an obvious location for the pasture fields of Duchy College.



2 The existing farmstead has had a big influence over our plans. It has the character to become the heart of the village; a mixed-use hub around which the homes evolve.



3 The north and eastern slopes were identified as forming parts of views cherished by people in Truro. We wanted to enhance this green panorama so saw this as a natural location for horticulture, orchards and allotments.



4 The location for the new Duchy College farm was identified in the east of the site, where fields can be easily accessed and watched over and to allow a relationship between the new College farm and existing farmstead/new village hub.



5 The western slopes were identified as an important part of the landscape setting – so this land was given over for agricultural fields.



6 The boundary with Morlaix Avenue and parts of the slopes to the east in particular were areas whose location and topography could be best enhanced by new woodland planting.



7 Access into the site for vehicles was identified as being possible from Morlaix Avenue, close to the Arch Hill junction, where site level differences were most favourable. The route travelling on into the Duchy College farm and onto the old farmstead works with the land's natural gradients.



8 Pedestrian and cycle access was identified from Morlaix Avenue to let people access Truro using green transport options (1). Links were also identified from either end of the farm's existing trackways – one to Arch Hill (2) and the other accessing Newham Lane (3). A railway to link walkers and hardy cyclists to the old railway line was also introduced (4).



9 The village area itself emerged as a natural expansion of the activity zone between the old farmstead and the new Duchy College Farm. It then extends along roads and trails, just like a traditional village would have done.



10 Finally the lone oak tree in the west of the site became a natural spot to anchor the west side of the village – marking the slope down towards Arch Hill.

Delivering the right skills for rural businesses

Duchy College has successfully bid for £50,000 from the Prince's Countryside Trust to fund the Nurturing Excellence Project which aims to help young people to progress into sustainable employment in food and farming.



Duchy College students

Helen Aldis, Manager at The Prince's Countryside Fund, explains; "The projects we are funding aim to tackle some of the challenges our rural communities are facing. The farming industry has warned of a skills shortage if the 60,000 new entrants we need in the next decade are not found. We must also grasp the opportunity to increase the quantity of British produced food to reduce our reliance on imported food which is currently at 40%."

That problem is echoed in horticulture, according to various industry and government reports there is a green skills shortage in the UK, with 70% of businesses stating that they cannot fill skilled vacancies.

At Higher Newham Farm in Truro, the Duchy College site will also act as a vehicle to encourage more young people to consider a career in the countryside, with horticulture, countryside conservation and farming skills all on offer. Each student will gain valuable hands on experience,

better preparing them for a career in their chosen field, a real example of making learning work.

Dr Phil Le Grice from Duchy College explains: "Delivering young people with the right skills, experiences and overall employability is core to everything we do. The rural economy of the South West is growing and the needs of businesses are changing. We hope that this funding, along with projects like Higher Newham Farm demonstrate to young people across Cornwall that there are a lot of well paid jobs in farming, food and horticulture and demand is growing for skilled young people.

"We also hope that the growing areas, orchard and flock of pedigree sheep at Higher Newham Farm will demonstrate the journey our food takes from plough to plate. People in Truro will be able to interact with the farm, watch the lambs grow and see how crops are produced, as well as gain recognisable qualifications."

The Great British Allotment

Matthew Thomson CEO of Cornwall Food Foundation reflects.



Hidden treasure

Allotments have been around since Anglo-Saxon times and are considered by many people to be a quintessential part of what it means to be British. It was during the two world wars that the allotment really came into its own at the heart of the British identity. In World War II, when we were asked to Dig for Victory, there were over 1.75 million allotments being gardened.

Since the economic downturn, combined with rising prices of food, more and more people are turning to growing their own. As a result, allotments are in high demand. It's not just the food or even the gardening experiences that people are looking for. They are looking for that sense of community that is unique to allotments: the easy companionship, gentle competitiveness, active neighbourliness and collective refuge that are characteristics of the allotment patch.

The ethos of our charity at Cornwall Food Foundation is that we believe food skills are life skills that can unlock the true potential of the most challenged individual. By working with people and food we can improve the economy, environment and health of Cornwall. We want to create a Restaurant and Cook School at the heart of Higher Newham. We believe that connecting people to the land through food provides a sense of belonging that is an essential ingredient to a happy life.

And in the simplest of ways, that's what I believe allotments bring to a community – connecting people back with good, honest, simple food grown with their own fair hands. Allotments connect people of all generations and backgrounds through the simple act of growing what's seasonal and local.

Community Fete: Sunday 7 September



The Higher Newham Fete will be taking place on Sunday 7 September.

It will be free to attend, but you will need a ticket to gain entry. To secure a ticket go to www.highernewham.com or to secure a ticket offline contact Julie Dearden on 01872 321533 or Julie@mpad.co.uk.

The fete will run from 11am–4pm with a park and ride service from Garras Wharf car park. There will be no cars on site (except for disabled badge holders).

There will be food, drink, low key music and entertainment, plus traditional stalls such as crockery smash, coconut shy and welly wanging.

Matthew Thomson, chief executive of Cornwall Food Foundation, said: "Part of our proposals are that 80% of the land will be gifted to the community, so we wanted to demonstrate that offering with a fantastic event that encourages people to come up on the site and see for themselves what we want to achieve.

"It's harvest time so a perfect time of year to celebrate food, farming and the link from plough to plate. We're pulling together a colourful offering of traditional fete activities and top quality food offering."



Take a look at the planning application

You can search for the planning application by its full name Higher Newham Farm and Village through Cornwall Councils' simple search form:

<http://planning.cornwall.gov.uk/online-applications/>

