

Mr & Mrs Ted & Amy Langdon
Castle Bryher
Bryher
Isles of Scilly
TR23 0PR

12th November 2018

Planning Department
Council of the Isles of Scilly
Town Hall
The Parade
St Mary's
Isles of Scilly
TR21 0LW

Dear Sir /Madam

Ref: Planning Application P/18/075, Bank Cottage, Bryher

Firstly, as leaseholders of the property named Glenhope, situated opposite Bank Cottage, we were very disappointed not to have received notification from the Council of the Isles of Scilly that plans for Bank Cottage had been submitted.

Secondly, and I appreciate that this paragraph won't be relevant to planning, I feel I need to provide some local context regarding Glenhope and Atlanta Cottages. Glenhope has been leased by the Langdon family since Ted's grandparents, Edward & Dorothy Langdon, took it on in the mid 1950's. Later, in the 1960's, Edward & Dorothy took on the property Atlanta as a workman's cottage for Glenhope (then a farm tenancy). Gerald & Gillian Langdon (Ted's parents) have been the leaseholders of Atlanta since the early 1980's, and Ted Langdon has been the leaseholder of Glenhope since 1988. Both Glenhope and Atlanta are residential properties, although Glenhope and part of Atlanta are currently used as units of accommodation for a successful self catering business with Glenhope's season running from mid February to the end of October every year; and Atlanta's season running from the end of March to the end of October every year; both with repeat bookings for many years in advance.

It is unfortunate that Amy only formally met Mr & Mrs Lowth on Saturday 10th November 2018 (at an island wedding on Tresco), for the first time since their purchase of Bank Cottage, and also that they, and their architects, have not deemed it necessary to discuss their plans for Bank Cottage with their closest neighbours prior to submitting them to the Planning Department. Indeed, Ted, Gerald & Gillian offered much assistance, through goodwill, to Mrs Lowth's sister on her move to Bryher, and in assisting her with Bank Cottage on her arrival; and are all a wealth of information regarding the traditional Scillonian granite cottages here on Bryher.

We recognize that renovations and improvements are needed on Bank Cottage, but are concerned that the proposed developments will be unnecessarily detrimental to the neighbouring properties, particularly Atlanta, as the closest property (approx. 4.5m at the closest point).

Our primary concern is the proposed increase of 1.165m to the roof ridge line of the original granite cottage. As you will see from the attached photos, increasing the height of this part of the building will block out the majority of the natural light from Atlanta, in particular the kitchen and the bedroom above. We would ask that the Local Authority investigates this further using the 45 degree rule and

taking into account the Rights of Light Act 1959, as well as the Isles of Scilly Design Guide (published in 2006) (page 58). We have also attached photos to show the proximity of Bank Cottage to Atlanta – this close proximity will only increase the impact of the raising of the roof ridge line.



View of the rear of Bank Cottage from Atlanta's kitchen.



View of the rear of Bank Cottage from front bedroom above the kitchen in Atlanta.



View of the rear of Bank Cottage from Atlanta's front door.



View of the rear of Bank Cottage from Atlanta's front door, looking SSE along the length of the property.



Looking towards Atlanta from the SE elevation of Bank Cottage. If the height is increased as proposed this will create a dominant, dark, overbearing appearance along the track.



View looking up the track past the NE elevation of Bank Cottage, showing the close proximity of Bank Cottage to Atlanta. As can be seen, the existing cream painted rendered gable end blends with the cream painted rendered gable end of Atlanta. The road/track is 2.7m wide.

Ted is a builder / handyman who is well known locally, having refurbished a number of local properties and frequently working on behalf of the Duchy of Cornwall. He has suggested that the

existing granite walls will be unable to support an additional 1.165m of granite on top of the existing walls, as proposed. These traditional Scillonian granite cottages have a lack of proper foundations, and we would suggest that the applicants should dig down into the floor of the existing cottage, rather than build upwards, to avoid this unwelcome increase in height to this part of the building, yet still provide the required interior ceiling heights, and also provide the opportunity to improve / underpin the current foundations.

This corner of Bryher is one of the most photographed parts of the island (indeed there are several widely available postcards of this part of the island), and we believe that the increased height of this original part of Bank Cottage will have a massive impact on the general character of the surrounding area, and that the proposed plans in their entirety are out of context within the intimate scale of Bryher.

The Isles of Scilly Design Guide; Appropriate Design Responses: Extensions and Alterations (page 75) states: ***'In view of the Conservation Area designation covering the islands, the Planning Authority will assess whether a proposal to alter or extend a building will harm it's character or it's setting. The Authority will also assess whether the extension or alteration will result in the loss of privacy or daylight in adjacent properties.'***

To quote from the current Local Plan (2005), ***'...the design of a proposal should be based on a thorough and caring understanding of its place and context.'***

Policy SS2 Sustainable Quality Design and Place-Making, taken from the current consultation draft of the Local Plan 2015 – 2030, states that ***'Buildings will be required to respect and reinforce an area's character and identity in order to maintain locally distinctive communities...Respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational treatment, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate any new buildings into their local setting...Safeguard the amenity of existing occupiers and create a high quality environment for future occupiers that addresses issues of privacy, overlooking, overshadowing and/or any overbearing impacts.'***

Policy LC9 Residential Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation, taken from the current consultation draft of the Local Plan 2015 – 2030, states that ***'Development to extend and/or alter a dwelling or any outbuilding ancillary to the main residential use will be permitted where the proposal:***

- a) respects the scale, proportions, materials and overall design and character of the existing property; and***
- b) does not harm the street scene or surrounding area; and***
- c) avoids the material loss of privacy and amenity for the residents of neighbouring properties.'***

We are also concerned about the proposed glazed link structure, which is definitely not in keeping with anything nearby, and which would surely risk a great increase in light pollution in this part of Bryher, and affecting our dark night skies. The proposed fenestration on the SW elevation of the main house will dominate the appearance of the building from Great Porth beach, Great Carn and Heathy Hill, and, in our opinion, give a more industrial than residential appearance, also out of character with it's surroundings.

Generally, the proposed plans may be retaining the granite of the original cottage, but we do not believe the designs reflect the character of the surrounding properties, and are not in scale with neighbouring domestic and rural properties. The proposed plans are for a large scale building within a small island community. The proposed developments will be extremely prominent in their skyline impact, not only from neighbouring properties but also from Great Porth beach, Great Carn, Heathy Hill and the surrounding tracks and footpaths.

These proposed plans for Bank Cottage and associated outbuildings, if approved by the Planning Committee, will have a detrimental impact on this area of Bryher and could ultimately lead to a loss of revenue for the three units of self catering accommodation in Atlanta and Glenhope (Glenhope being divided into two for letting purposes).

While we don't object to the proposed extension to the 'garden cottage' in general, we would like to again suggest that this is dug down more into the sloping ground, and to ensure that no additional windows will be added to the NW elevation presently, or in the future, as these would look directly into the bedrooms of Glenhope, as shown by the below photo (the red circle showing the position of the extension):



View from Glenhope's twin bedroom window towards the site for the proposed extension to the 'garden cottage'

On the subject of the 'garden cottage' for the applicant's sister, we would like to question Ms Bagnall's suggested Key Worker status. We know that she was a relief teaching assistant at the Five Islands School Tresco Base for a time, but we were under the impression that Key Worker status needed to be applied for – is this still the case?

We are also concerned about the proposed height of the new workshop/studio, again the roof ridge height being raised, this time by 1.24m. It is not clear why the height of this building needs to be raised by such a significant amount, especially as the footprint seems to have doubled in size, too. This raised roof height will have a significant impact on the view from Glenhope's bedroom window, as can be seen in the following photo:



View from Glenhope's double bedroom window towards the site of the proposed new workshop/studio

We would like to suggest that the proposed roof height is revised to keep below the line of the boundary hedge, to a similar height of the outbuilding in the neighbouring field belonging to Mr & Mrs Gerald and Gillian Langdon of Atlanta.

CONDITIONS:

We ask for the following conditions to be applied to any grant of permission:

1. All boundary hedges and trees should be left in situ and should be retained at their current height to reduce the impact of proposed developments on the site.
2. Suitable conditions should be imposed to prevent residential use of the workshop/studio, or subdivision of the property into separate saleable residential units.
3. Work should be restricted to between the hours of 0800 to 1800, and between the months of November and mid March only, to reduce the impact of works on residents and self catering and hotel visitors alike.
4. A site waste management plan for demolition and construction should be produced.
5. Details of incorporating sustainability should be provided eg energy conservation and efficiency, the use of renewable resources, grey water harvesting etc.
6. Bats are regularly seen in the area around Glenhope, so appropriate actions should be taken to ensure none are harmed during any works.

In summary, we recognize that renovations and improvements to Bank Cottage are required, but there seems to us to be ways to move forward on which the residents of all properties in that area of Bryher can agree, if the applicants and the agent are willing to consult with us. We believe that the designs should be better proportioned to their surroundings and more in keeping with nearby properties.

Finally, we would also like to express concern that the applicants, although they currently state that their intention is to retire to Bryher, may not in fact do this in the future and that Bank Cottage will

become yet another second home, occupied only occasionally through the year and therefore of very little benefit to the local community and economy.

We would be grateful if the Planning Department and Committee of the Council of the Isles of Scilly will seriously consider our comments, and those of our neighbours and regular guests. If the Planning Committee wish to make a site visit, you would be most welcome to view the site from both Glenhope and Atlanta if required, please feel free to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

Ted & Amy Langdon