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*By Olivia.Rickman at 5:07 pm, Nov 23, 2021*

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

Dear Members and Planning Department,

We have applied for Full Planning Permission for an affordable self-build home at Longstone, St Mary's; neighbouring Sian's parents' existing home. This opportunity has become possible via the Duchy's sale of the freehold for this land to Sian's parents, Sonia and Michael Scott, who already owned the Leasehold. The Duchy are aware of our wishes to self-build our own home and are supportive of these plans. Our designs have been submitted to the Duchy for approval.

Liam has lived on the islands since he was born and Sian's family moved to the islands 20 years ago, and they both attended both primary and secondary school on St Mary's. Sian returned to the islands from University in 2015 and has since worked in the Five Islands Academy and more recently, as Housing Enabling Officer for the Council progressing the Council's Housing Delivery project. Liam completed an apprenticeship in Building in 2010 and has been working in the trade on the islands ever since. He became self-employed in 2017 and has hopes to offer apprenticeships through his business; as this has been extremely beneficial for him.

We hope to remain on the islands to bring up our own family in the future. This is something which is becoming increasingly difficult with aspirations to build our own home or even own our own home difficult and unaffordable, due to lack of available and affordable land or suitable properties.

It has always been a dream of ours to build our own home and create a sustainable, lifetime home for us and our family in the future. As individuals, we have previously been impacted by the acute housing shortage on the islands and the lack of affordable homes to rent or buy. We are lucky to now be resident in a one-bedroom social property; however with hopes for a family in the near future, we are once again reliant on a suitable property becoming available to accommodate our housing needs. Liam was deemed Specific Local Need in 2016. We have had a registered interest in opportunities to build our own home via the Council's Self-build register since it was established in 2016. During that time, no opportunities to progress this have become available to us.

Homes available on the IOS housing market are not accessible to us financially or do not meet our housing needs and, more recently, are snapped up by cash buyers moving to the islands

or for conversion to holiday accommodation. We recognise the importance of bringing new households and skills to the islands and accommodation for our tourist industry for the sustainability of the islands' economy and reversing the population decline we have seen in recent years; however this limits options for our own future housing needs and we would therefore hope to solve the housing issue for ourselves by building our own sustainable home.

Given the limited land supply and fewer opportunities for self-building, we hope to make the most of the opportunity we have available. With the land already in our family's ownership, this presents an affordable way to build our own home. It also allows us more financial capacity to include the sustainable and high quality design measures we are passionate about.

We have many ambitions for creating a sustainable home on the islands; and hope to include various sustainable and renewable measures in our home, if successful. These will include, air source heat pump, rainwater harvesting (including, pump fed system), solar pvs and a fabric-first approach. We are looking to ensure the use of quality and sustainable materials in our design.

We also hope to integrate biodiversity features on the site and plan to retain and add to the current biodiversity present; which is something Sian's family are extremely passionate about. The design and position of the home will be in keeping with the existing property on the site and is subject to the Duchy's architectural approval. We have also included designated office space for Liam to operate his business from. This space provides an additional bedroom to meet any future accessibility needs, as will be situated on the ground floor of the house.

The benefits of building on this site will also allow support to be given to Sian's parents into the future and likewise. With shared services such as joining into the existing septic tank, this will support the maintenance of these systems as well as, shared grounds maintenance which on a site of this size, is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain.

The last year and a half has given us all a refreshed perspective on the importance of our health and wellbeing, but also making sure we create an inspiring, sustainable home that has long lasting benefits.

We are both active members in our community, serving on the local Gig Club committee as well as both rowing annually. Liam is also an active member of the islands' football club. We also actively fundraise for both the Gig club and other causes close to our hearts.

We hope that this letter demonstrates our lifetime commitment to the islands and the ambition we have to create a sustainable, affordable home for our family. We hope your consent will allow us to remain on the islands and raise a family in a place that we love.

We thank you for the time you have taken to consider our application.

Yours sincerely,

Liam Greenlaw and Sian Scott