

## **Design and Access Statement: Proposed new dwelling at Longstone**

### **Overview of project**

We are seeking planning permission for a two-storey detached dwelling to meet local need, and accommodate 3 bedrooms and 1 office/ground floor bedroom, in the garden of the existing Longstone Bungalow. The design and layout of the home is planned to meet our current and future needs, with the inclusion of an office in one of the bedrooms to accommodate business and work requirements.

### **Design & Scale**

The main design principles are to provide an unobtrusive, well presented dwelling which sits in keeping with the neighbouring property, nearby houses and the landscape. The scale of the proposed dwelling is similar in height to the neighbouring property on the site, with the proposed dwelling 40cm taller.

The proposed dwelling is set back from the lane which runs in parallel and is set lower than the site; meaning it would not be visible to passers-by. The dwelling will be finished with render and a natural slate roof. The design of the home is subject to Duchy approval, who retain architectural rights for the property. Initial discussions have indicated that the design is in keeping with surrounding properties and has been sent for comment from the Duchy's architect.

### **Sustainability**

As the land is already in our ownership, the viability of the project is greatly improved and will allow for a number of features to be included in the design. First and foremost, we will apply a fabric first approach; and the home will be built with timber frame and external block work which can be fitted with insulation both in between the block and timber frame, as well as in between the timber frame panels to improve the U-value and airtightness. We intend to include an air source heat pump, powered by solar PVs to supply underfloor heating and negate the need for the use of fossil fuels to heat the home. Although there is a chimney shown on the plans, this will be used to provide ventilation and for aesthetic purposes only; in line with the Duchy's design requirements.

External rainwater collection tanks will be fitted with a pump to allow this to supply the toilets and external water taps. The windows will be made from aluminium with thermal breaks to improve the overall energy efficiency and airtightness of the home. Aluminium windows are shown to be the most suitable material for coastal locations and provide a sustainable, fully recyclable material.

It is also our intention to provide capabilities to charge an Electric Vehicle for personal and business use in the future.

### **Benefits**

We appreciate that our proposal does not meet Policy LC7 through utilising a site allocated in our Local Plan (2015-2030) for housing; however we hope that our application demonstrates how utilising a site already in our ownership will allow us to create a higher quality, sustainable home through improving the viability of this project.

As the site already has an existing home present, as well as a number of properties in the immediate vicinity, we are able to connect to the existing infrastructure in place. The pre-app advice received indicated that the Local Plan Policy LC7 was designed to ensure we

protect undeveloped parts of the islands, to focus infrastructure to existing connections. The design of this proposed dwelling plans to connect to a septic tank serving the existing property on the site and so does not add additional pressure to this infrastructure. Communications with South West Water have also indicated that they would be able to support this application via water supply. The application also looks to connect to an existing driveway which joins onto a private lane so should not impact the public highway.

The pre-app advice received also quoted that to date, within the plan period, the LPA have permitted 23 new homes, of the 105 identified as required to meet current and future housing need on the islands. Of this number, only 1 has been completed indicating severe market failure. We wish to solve the housing problem for ourselves by building a lifetime home to meet our current and future needs. We are open to a Section 106 agreement to ensure this remains a local need dwelling in perpetuity. Both applicants also meet the requirements of Policy LC2 for Qualifying for Affordable homes.

By building our own home and solving the housing need issue for ourselves; we will also free up a one-bedroom social property for another individual or couple in housing need.

Our proposal also addresses a number of Local Plan (2015-2030) policies:

**SS1: Principles of sustainable development**

The proposed new dwelling at Longstone will make a positive contribution to the social, economic and environmental needs of the islands through:

- Incorporating sustainable design measures and renewables; made possible with the ability to build on land already owned by the applicants. This will include capabilities to charge electric vehicles in the future as part of the applicant's personal and business needs
- Utilising the existing driveway to Longstone Bungalow to improve access via the highway; by extending this out of view from the public domain and minimising loss of green space unnecessarily
- Promoting the biodiversity gain on the site by incorporating a scheme of tree planting, specifically local native species which compliment and enhance the existing local biodiversity.
- Bird and bat boxes, bee hotels and (native) wildflower nectar sources for pollinators will also be incorporated into the site. This will provide more variety of and quality of food sources and shelter for wildlife than existed prior to the proposed development
- Incorporating water saving measures, including rainwater collection and pump fed system to supply the dwelling's toilets and outdoor taps with rainwater.
- Energy efficient measures utilised throughout the home, including smart appliances and LED lighting.
- Allowing a local household to continue to contribute to the islands' economy through their business and voluntary activities
- Support the needs of the applicants' family through shared maintenance on and around Longstone Bungalow and potential future needs

**SS2: Sustainable quality design and place-making**

Access to the proposed new dwelling has been designed to minimise the unnecessary disruption of open green space. The proposed access will be nestled behind the existing

garage accompanying the neighbouring property (access rights agreed). This will shield the access driveway from view and make use of the existing driveway to Longstone Bungalow. The proposed dwelling has been located set back from the neighbouring property, both to protect the impact on the landscape and its visibility and also to provide privacy to both the new dwelling and existing property. The boundary between the property will also be lined with shrubbery to provide further natural shielding from overlooking and noise.

Sustainable features have been incorporated throughout the design of the proposed dwelling. Windows have been designed to maximise natural light and warmth; made from sustainable materials to improve airtightness and retain heat in winter. Waste and recycling facilities have also been considered and an external bin store will be located next to the property and by the driveway to allow easy collection from the highway. This can also be shared by the existing property.

### **LC3: Balanced housing stock**

The proposed dwelling has been designed to meet the current and future needs of the applicants. The dwelling includes 4 bedrooms, 1 of which will form an office space for Liam, who is a self-employed builder and also remote working space for Sian, who is employed by the Council. This office space is also located on the ground floor, and so provides an opportunity to reconfigure bedrooms if accessibility needs change in the future. By providing a home that meets our current and future needs, will allow us to remain in our home for a lifetime as well as, continue to operate a business out of. This also provides opportunities for multi-generational living; if family needs require such in the future. The proposed dwelling is designed in accordance with the Nationally Described Space Standards and local planning policy to provide the below usable floor space:

No. of bedrooms	Max no. occupants	Storeys	Floor space
4	8	2	161.3m <sup>2</sup> *inclusive of storage

### **OE2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

To enable the proposed dwelling, 1 Pine tree will need to be removed to allow sufficient space from root coverage. This will be replaced with a scheme of tree planting of native species elsewhere on the site, predominantly Elm and Hawthorn. We will look to acquire cuttings from existing Elm and Hawthorn on the islands to avoid the spread of disease from importing these. The wood from the removed tree will be utilised in the house build either through internal beams or furniture to ensure no unnecessary waste.

Currently the site has many non-native species of shrubbery including, pittosporum present which do not provide habitats for any native species of bird, mammal or insects. As part of the wider landscaping for the scheme, we will look to plant native species of tree and shrub that are appropriate for the local ecosystem. These will include both fast growing shrub species such as Hawthorn and slower growing species like Elm. These will soften the development faster and provide habitat for wildlife earlier as well as offset carbon.

The positioning of the proposed dwelling has been chosen to minimise need to remove any further trees and avoid the pine belt to the north and west. As the site is already in our ownership, alternative locations do not provide a viable project. The tree survey completed in August 2021 shows that there were previously further trees surrounding this lone pine;

which have been destroyed in previous storms, removing the shelter of this pine. The removal of this tree will therefore protect any potential damage to the existing property on the site, the garage and greenhouse which are all in close proximity to this tree.

Bat and bird boxes, bee hotels, a natural pond and a native wildflower meadow will be created in the long term landscaping to encourage biodiversity gain on the site through the increase of naturally occurring Scillonian species and habitats. This landscaping will also provide a refuge of naturalised habitat in the farmed interior of the island. It will also provide a stepping stone that will allow species to move around the island which will contribute to the resilience of the islands' wildlife populations.

Rainwater harvesting, pump fed to toilets/waste water systems and external taps to minimise water use will be implemented. Water saving devices and water efficient appliances will also be installed, including low flush toilets.

#### **OE7(5): Development affecting heritage; Conservation area**

The design and location of the proposed dwelling has been considered to minimise impact on the landscape; and is set back to sit nestled in front of the pine belt behind. From the lane which runs parallel to the site the new home will barely be visible as this track sits lower than the site and will be shielded by a natural boundary and the existing stone wall (see Photo D).

From further afield, there will be no more than glimpses of the proposed dwelling only from the east and the use of natural slate roof will provide an additional blending into the trees behind.

The dwelling will not be visible from the north or west, and will be shielded from view by the existing garage and further trees from the south.

The proposed dwelling has been designed to be in keeping with neighbouring properties and the islands' context, with a roughcast render finish similar to the neighbouring house and many others on St Mary's. The design and materials have been chosen to minimise the visibility and environmental impact and be sensitive to the conservation area.

The approach to the access to the site has been designed to minimise loss of green space and utilise the existing driveway serving Longstone Bungalow and continue behind the existing garage, meeting a private lane. The alternative was to utilise the gateway directly to the southeast of the proposed dwelling which would require this to cut across open green space. This area is also envisaged to host new trees as part of the scheme of tree planting. The septic tank and soakaway which serves the existing property and will serve the proposed dwelling also sits just within this gateway. By avoiding access directly across this; we avoid potential damage to this infrastructure.