

PLANNING STATEMENT **RAVEEN, CHURCH STREET, ST MARY'S.**



INTRODUCTION

Raveen is a Grade II listed building, whose importance lies in its location within a terrace. The above photograph shows that the importance of the building is in its front elevation. The rear of the property, like many others within the terrace has been the subject of much alteration over the years. The object of this application is to address some of the problems of this building and thus to extend its future life.

THE PROBLEMS

These are as follows:-

1. Lack of any rear access
2. Inappropriately sited toilet facilities.
3. Lack of adequate fire escape from a section of the building
4. A failing roof.

Lack of rear access

Some years ago a garden wall was constructed which deprived Raveen of any rear access. As a consequence all refuse, bicycles, garden waste and other garden detritus has had to be taken through the habitable rooms of the house.

Solution - This unsatisfactory situation can easily be remedied by reinstating the rear pedestrian access to the property and this proposal seeks to achieve this by the addition of a garden gate in the rear boundary wall and a bounded footpath through the garden of Beach House (formerly Scotsville). This is simply a reinstatement of the rear access formerly enjoyed by Raveen. It is not considered that this would be a highly trafficked footpath and the Applicant, who is also the owner of Beach House, would be happy to grant the necessary easement. This will also provide an additional means of escape from the property, to Porthcressa Road, in the event of fire or domestic emergency.

Benefits - Until recently Raveen has been tenanted on an ad hoc basis. This rear access (along with the other proposed improvements) will significantly improve the quality of the listed accommodation and will make a worthwhile, and much needed, addition to the private rented sector of Scilly.

Inappropriately sited toilet facilities

The current accommodation sees a toilet cubicle in the lounge. Not part of the original listing and is work that appears to have been carried out without consent. It is a legacy of the inability of the previous owners to negotiate the stairs to the upstairs toilet. It is generally considered that this is not a satisfactory arrangement for the future and is no longer necessary.

Solution - The cubicle can be removed, thus restoring the property to its former condition.

Benefits - The listed status of the building would benefit from its removal.

Lack of adequate fire escape from a section of the building

The small upstairs room within the roof space currently has only its own specific staircase as fire escape. Clearly, when it was first constructed, possibly as a servant's bedroom, little thought was given to means of escape in the event of fire.

Solution - In order to adapt this building to the 21st century, regardless of its use, the addition of a conservation rooflight to the sleigh roof at the rear would solve the problem.

Benefit - By this simple addition, the long term use of the listed building is assisted. This benefit would serve several purposes:-

a) It would accord with current Chief Fire Officers and Institute of Environmental Health recommendations for means of escape in providing an outward opening minimum 450 x 450 window no more than 1100mm from the floor.

b) The I. O. S. Design Guide 2006 encourages the use of roof lights. It advocates the benefits of “ **sloping roof lights facing the sun, increasing the solar radiation received** “ and encourages the “**use of roof lights and light reflecting surfaces to help reduce the need for artificial lighting**”, thus “**reducing demands and providing resources in a sustainable way and planning for the future**”. This roof light faces due South.

A failing roof.

Recent storms have demonstrated that the present roof covering is failing. Riffles have been repaired but it is evident on inspection that, although the roof timbers appear sound, the slate covering of the roof needs replacing. (see attached photos of the inside of the roof.)

Presently this is a mixture of wet laid slate (scantle) to the front elevation to Church Street and a combination of wet laid and dry laid slate to the rear.

Solution - The proposal is to replace the front elevation with wet laid slate. Here it makes a valued contribution to the street scene, as it is a part

of the continuous terrace of houses and roofs that comprise that street scene and is the principal reason for its listing – as part of that terrace.

The proposal at the rear is to replace the mixture of wet and dry laid slate entirely with a dry laid slate.

Benefits – The integrity of the front elevation is retained. The proposed treatment of the rear also has a number of benefits and is proposed for many reasons:-

1) It would simply not be possible to save enough slates from the building to completely wet lay it again with the reclaimed slates. However some of the old slates from the rear could no doubt be used to augment the requirement for the front of the building. This is in line with the I. O. S. Design Guide which urges that “**wherever possible recycled or reclaimed materials sourced locally should be used**”. It also suggests that ‘**slate in larger, more regular sizes (than scantle) can also be used**’.

2) We are also advised that “**as character and sustainability are the twin pillars of appropriate design that the Guide aims to promote. Although it is important to demonstrate an environmental and cultural awareness of the built heritage of the islands we must embrace building techniques that reflect our advanced technology and contemporary lifestyles. As we move further into the new millennium Scilly will be judged on how well these two objectives are met**”. The modern convention of double nailing slate with copper or rot proof nails onto tanalised battens, augmented with a second waterproof membrane of felt is just such an advancement in technology. Particularly in the harsh conditions of wind and rain in this maritime climate it will prolong the life of the South facing rear of this building, whilst still presenting the characterful slate surface that echoes that which it replaces; but in a more practical and sustainable manner.

3) Such an approach also accords with the National Planning Policy Framework guidance of “**always seeking to secure high quality**

design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings” (Core planning principles Para 17).

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE WORKS

We propose these 4 elements of works in order to ‘give the past a future’. Whilst the street scene has been preserved in accordance with its listed building status over many years, the rear of this terrace area has lost the cohesion that it once must have had. All of these houses would have been built as one-room deep cottages that over the years have gained a plethora of inappropriate extensions, in a variety of construction materials and with many incongruous features.

The contribution the rear of this terrace makes to the integrity of the conservation area as a whole is thus severely and inevitably compromised.

The attached 6 photos demonstrate this quite clearly. Houses on either side of Raveen have roofs of concrete tiles, flat fibreglass and many of them incorporate dry laid slate and even artificial slate roofs. There are rendered blockwork extensions, 1970’s window frames and a variety of later chimney styles.

Toward the end of the terrace, Hamewith, the Council’s own property, has been extensively refurbished in recent years and is a good example of ‘giving the past a future’. The roof elevation to Church Street has been retained as wet laid slate but the rear elevation and all of its outbuildings have had new dry laid slate roofs; incorporating the benefits to the listed building of modern technology and sustainability, without any loss of character. Even the addition of the conservation window in the rear roof does not detract from the integrity of the listed building, despite the rear elevation being clearly visible from the pedestrian way next to Park House. This should now enable Hamewith to go forward in good heart into the 21st century. It makes a positive contribution as a whole to the Conservation area and is an exact mirror of the proposal for Raveen.

The rear elevation of Raveen cannot be seen from any footpath or road. It can only be seen from the rear of the opposite properties

CONCLUSIONS

The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 187, advises that **“Local Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems and decision takers, at every level, should seek to approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible.”**

It is in this spirit that the scheme, which should be considered as a whole, rather than a menu of individual elements, aims to secure the future and sustainability of Raveen, whilst contributing to the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area in which it stands.