

## Conservation Officer Comments

**Ref:** P/17/048/FUL

**Address:** Site adjacent to the church and close to the Quayside at Church Quay, Bryher

**Proposal:** New detached 3-bed dwelling

This is an application for a residential development on a greenfield site between the Grade II All Saints Church and associated church yard and a new dwelling to the north. The field is a former bulb strip field that evolved in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, according to the identified landscape character assessment. It remains undeveloped and as such this is a high potential to uncover currently unknown archaeological remains at this site. It is recommended that archaeological monitoring is carried out should development be permitted, particularly for the scale proposed.

### **Impact upon the Conservation Area**

In terms of the wider impacts then the site is within a designated conservation area for which there is a requirement to assess whether the plans demonstrate a preservation or enhancement of the landscape.

The proposed dwelling is set within a landscape that comprises a gently sloping field facing east, looking out towards Tresco and the channel between Tresco and Bryher. The dwelling is proposed to be two storey, with the east, north and south elevations being clearly two storey, but from the rear west elevation this will appear as a modest single storey structure, due to the topography of the site. Materials are a mixture of clay pantiles over vertical and horizontal timber cladding with the main section of the ground floor and chimney detail being granite. Windows and doors are timber. The design and style is simple and of a traditional appearance. Although the property does not attempt to be of a 'cottage' design it does reflect some of the more recent developments on the islands, particularly across on Tresco.

The site is screened in terms of boundary hedges but is open to the front. The new dwelling will be clearly visible particularly when viewed from the quay, the channel and Tresco. It is however considered to be of a sympathetic design that would be constructed of natural materials in keeping with the character of more recent developments on the islands. The use of clay pantiles is a common feature on top of granite buildings, but the use of natural slate would ensure the dwelling is not overly prominent, which could be the case with the red clay pantiles originally proposed.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable without giving rise to significant harm on the wider character of the conservation area.

### **Impacts on listed buildings**

The nearest listed buildings and one of only 3 on Bryher is All Saints Church. The church has a clearly defined boundary in terms of its position within the landscape particularly with the road the slope of the site constraining it from expansion north or west. The landscape to the south comprises further bulb strip field systems of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and the foreshore and quay prevent expansion further east. In terms of impacts upon All Saints Church then it is considered that the proposal does not fall within the curtilage of this protected building, although there are outgrown field boundaries and trees there will be some views of the dwelling from the church. I consider that the site falls within the surrounding agricultural landscape. There is a road plus an additional field between the application site and the boundary of the church, which is situated to the south of the proposed

dwelling. As a church this structure has clear evidential value from both the structure and graveyard monuments, there is clear historical value that connects the lives of past generations to the current families and visitors to Bryher. As a pleasingly situated building of ecclesiastic architectural merit the church has high aesthetic value which is enhanced by the details of enclosure of the site, the gated access points and by the church and grave markers themselves. Finally the communal value of the church is considered to be high for the connections to the past human activities and families of this small island community. Whilst the boundary and curtilage of this site remains tightly and clearly defined, the setting is very much part of this wider island landscape. The church sits very much within the agricultural landscape that is an integral part of the character of Bryher. On balance and whilst the proposal is within 60 metres of the church it is not considered, however that the proposal would affect the setting of this listed building. There are also significant community benefits to the delivery of a dwelling, replacing a recently lost dwelling on Bryher. The dwelling is to be used to either meeting local housing requirements or assist in housing staff working on the islands, which is not a consideration that can easily be ignored given the recognised housing issues of the islands and the barriers associated with delivery.

It is considered that the use of a defined field, with retention of the boundaries, closely aligning with existing residential developments, will not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed church, whose values I consider will remain intact and unaffected by the proposed development.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Walton', written in a cursive style.

Lisa Walton

24/08/2017