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Design & Access Statement

Retain/regularise a unit of self-contained staff accommodation at Peninnis Farm

History

The current unit of accommodation at Peninnis Farm has over time been a dairy, tying shed and staff room. There has been a bathroom there since 1982 when Jon took on the tenancy of the farm.

The building is small and unpractical for storage for modern farming needs and with flowers no longer being produced on the farm there was no longer a need for a tying room. Due to the size and layout of the building any future farm plans of expansion or diversification would not be able to make use of the building and so it was turned into a staff room/gym and place for younger family members to have some space in 2011.

The works were done over quite a period of time (when time allowed) of about 6 months. The works included a small amount of new stud work, new panelling and doors (internal), some refurbishment of electrics and plumbing and replacement of a window.

Background

There is support in both the current 2005 Local Plan and the emerging Local Plan 2015-2030 for staff accommodation to meet the needs of businesses. As a family we run multiple businesses including Peninnis Farm and Peninnis Farm Lodges, Sandpiper Apartments, Sandpiper Shop and The Farm Deli and have found that having suitable staff accommodation is a must for recruiting the right staff, however there appears to be a shortage of suitable staff accommodation options on the islands. Due to the nature of the farm work it is important that staff are living on the farm to be on call for both the animals and lodge guests.

In the past we have always managed with local staff and family members but as the businesses have grown we now have a need for a management couple and so need a self-contained unit of accommodation rather than a rented room to attract the right couple with the relevant experience. When advertising the roles all applications were from couples on the mainland with no interest locally in the positions.

The current Local Plan discusses the need for staff accommodation under policy 3 (2b) where it states that there should be a *'provision of staff accommodation for businesses on or near the premises where possible and where it can be demonstrated that there is no other accommodation available and it is not possible to recruit staff already housed on the islands.'*

We have employed our first management couple for this season from the mainland and they moved into the unit on the 18th March 2018. It has always been our plan that the unit will only be occupied by those who are employed by Peninnis Farm.