

**Extension and Alterations to
9 Little Porth, Porthcressa,
Hugh Town, St.Mary's
Isles of Scilly
For
Mr Robert Francis**



DESIGN STATEMENT

September 2018

1. BACKGROUND

Robert Francis has recently purchased Number 9 Little Porth at the Western end of Porthcressa Beach in Hugh Town. He plans to move into his new home on a permanent basis once he has undertaken some important changes to the end-of-terrace bungalow. The building has been owned and occupied for many years by Mr & Mrs Hasler who are moving back to the mainland to be closer to their family.

This design report supports a detailed planning application to The Isles of Scilly Council to extend and alter the property for the first time in many years. It should be read in conjunction with the pack of planning drawings – numbers 1948-P01 to P08 inclusive. A bat survey has also been carried out and this is also included with the planning application. This survey concluded that no bats were present and there is no need for further survey work.



2. EXISTING BUILDING

Number 9 Little Porth is a terraced dormer bungalow at the very Western end of the beach with gardens running down to the coast path. The main property with a hipped asbestos-cement tiled roof was apparently constructed in the 1930's. It has since been extended with small flat-roofed constructions to the rear. Douglas Cawley and Associates (St.Ives based surveyors) have inspected the building on behalf of the applicant and consider it to be in sound condition having been well maintained by the previous owners.



Although the building has little architectural merit the South facing outlook over Porcrossa Beach, the island archipelago and the Atlantic Ocean is quite stunning (see above). The open aspect also means that 9 Little Porth is very visible from the coast path on the far side of the boundary hedge. The back of the bungalow is also clearly seen from the main road where the flat-roofed extensions are the most prominent feature (see below).



The property is loosely divided into the main 3-bedroom dwelling and adjoining single bedroomed self-contained flat. The ground floor living accommodation includes an open kitchen / dining / sitting space and a workshop at the back that also serves as a circulation space. The amount of sleeping accommodation is therefore disproportionately large compared to the living space and is something that needs to be addressed.

3. DESIGN BRIEF

As far as the applicant is concerned there are some fundamental issues with the layout of the property that need to be addressed. Firstly Robert Francis has no need for an internal workshop taking up valuable space. The living accommodation is restricted and needs to be improved to create separate sitting and kitchen / dining areas. The two attic bedrooms only have clear headroom directly below the ridge or inside the dormer windows so this also needs to be improved.

One feature of the property that does work well is the self contained flat. Mr Francis's elderly mother lives with him so the flat linked to the main house will provide the perfect home for her. She will be in close contact with her son who will be able to keep a close eye on her. There are therefore no plans to make any significant changes to the floor layout at this end of the building.

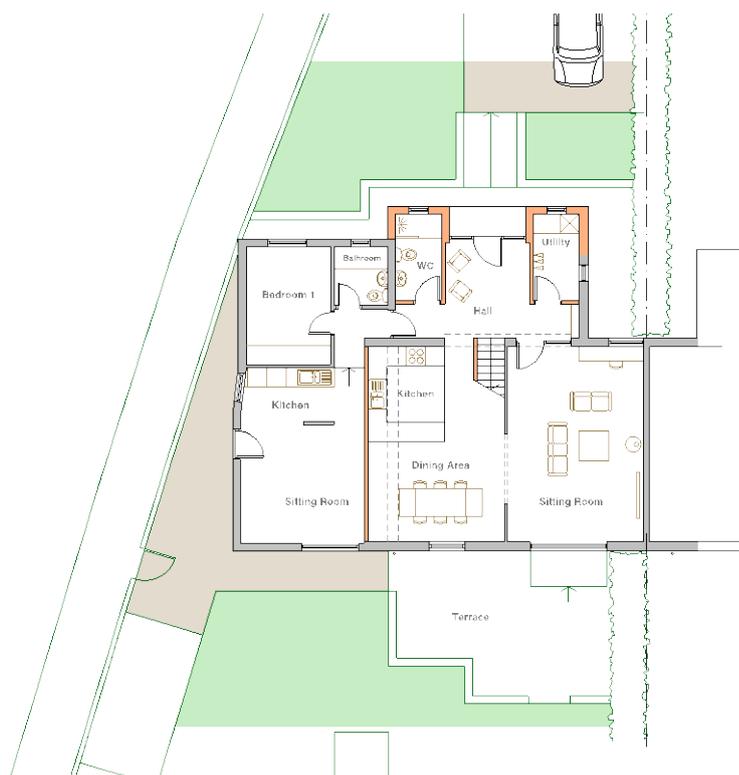
Mr Francis's family are also regular visitors so two good bedrooms will be needed with en-suite facilities. In addition to this space should be made available on the ground floor level for a pull-out sofa bed.

Finally the applicant would like to take this opportunity to give this prominent building at the Western end of Porthcressa something of a facelift. Little thought was paid to the design of the fenestration when the building was originally constructed or later extended. Window and door heads are out of alignment and the proportions of the plastic windows vary considerably. There is clearly scope to improve the appearance of the building at the same time as addressing the internal spatial requirements. Removing the asbestos-cement tiles and re-roofing in natural slate will help to transform the property and must be regarded as a planning gain.

Mr Francis has also had some early pre-application discussions with Craig Dryden about the possibilities for improving the street and coastal frontages. It was agreed that by addressing the boundary treatment the public realm could be improved, continuing the waterfront regeneration at this end of Porthcressa Beach. Also the dilapidated green 'shed' backing onto the footpath could be replaced to further enhance the coastal strip.

4. PROPOSED DESIGNS

The requirements of the applicant's design brief have been achieved by making some modest changes to the ground floor layout and by raising the roof structure by approximately 700mm. The plan below is an extract from one of the planning drawings and helps to illustrate the alterations. Existing walls are coloured in grey and new construction in orange so the changes can be clearly seen.

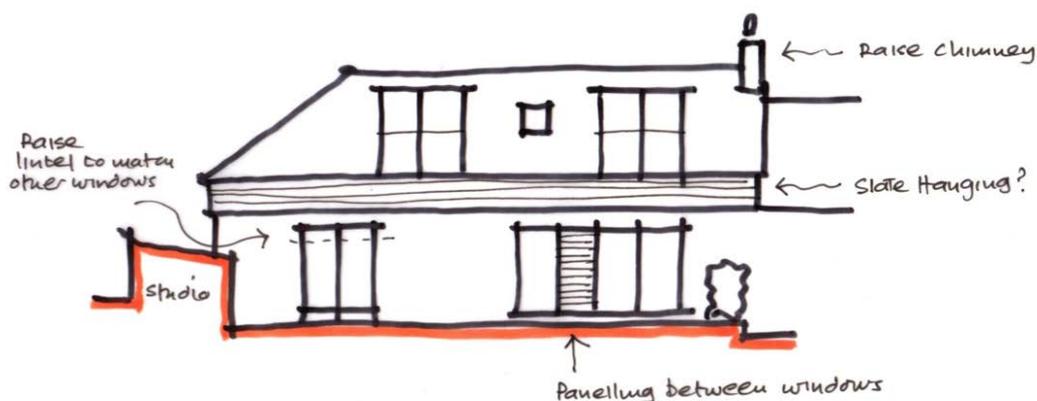


The different elements of the design can be summarised as follows:

- Living accommodation: By removing the ground floor bedroom / ensuite in the centre of the property a new kitchen / dining space can be created. This room will be linked to the current open plan living area through a new internal opening with sliding doors. The rather clumsy masonry fireplace will be removed (helping to gain space) and replaced with a new wood-burning stove
- Entrance Hall: A welcoming entrance hall will be achieved by rebuilding the front external wall of the flat-roofed extension approximately 1metre proud of the current building line. A covered area outside the glazed entrance screen will provide shelter in poor weather. Inside the house a toilet and shower room has been incorporated on one side of the hall and a cloakroom / utility space on the other. The vaulted ceiling and centrally positioned staircase will help to create an exciting first impression
- 'Grannie Flat': Very few changes to this area are proposed although the patio doors are to be enlarged to match the proportions of the main living room doorway. Subject to advice from the applicant's structural

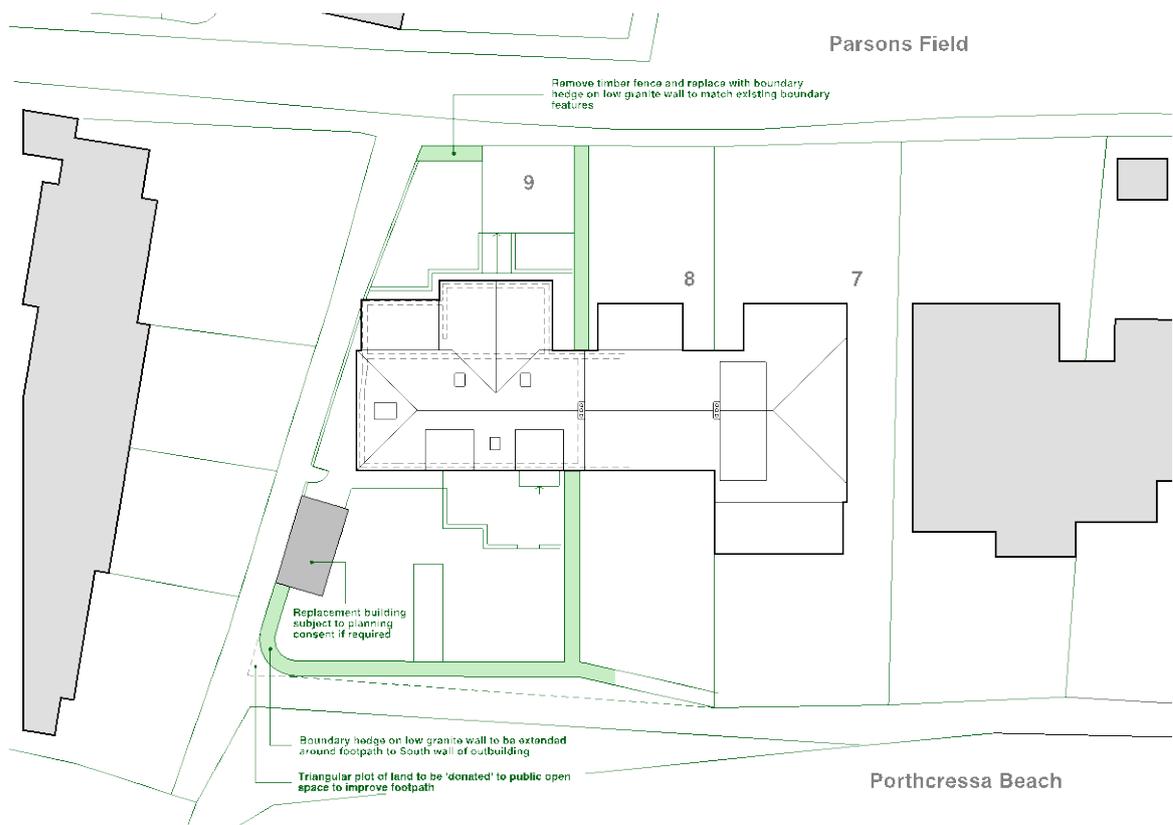
engineer, the internal wall between the main bungalow and flat living room is to be re-positioned to improve the proportions of the main dwelling

- First Floor Bedrooms: By raising the roof structure much better bedroom accommodation can be provided at first floor level. A master bedroom is proposed within the re-constructed roof hip at the Western end of the property and a second bedroom by the party wall. Both rooms will have their own en-suite facilities at the back of the roof structure where the existing drainage facilities exist. The access staircase is to be reconstructed in a more central location to better serve both bedrooms and keep circulation space to an absolute minimum
- Visual Impact: Care has been taken to make significant improvements to the very prominent external elevations. The early sketch or the South Elevation below illustrates the design objective to align sides and tops of windows where possible and balance solid and void elements. Raising of the roof-line at this end of the terrace is entirely appropriate as it follows the rising contours of the land. The new roof will be clad in natural slate and the raised sections of the external walls will be finished in untreated cedar boarding. Both materials are in keeping in this waterfront location. The applicant would welcome a planning condition to ensure that the Council's planning authority has an opportunity to approve samples. At the back of Number 9 the extended hallway will have a pitched roof replacing the current flat roof. An imposing gable window incorporating the entrance door will throw natural light deep into the building. Porthole windows have been incorporated on either side reflecting the applicant's maritime connections.



FRONT ELEVATION

- Outdoor space: The garden at the front of the property is a large grassed open space and the ground at the rear is primarily hard surfacing. Neither contributes much to the quality of the immediate environment or public realm. Planned improvements here include investment in appropriate landscaping and the replacement of the rather tired boundary fencing. On the plan below new boundary hedging is shown in green planted in low granite boundary walls. A small triangular section of land to in the SW corner of the garden will be 'donated' to the public space to improve the coastal footpath. As mentioned above, the 'green shed' will be replaced with a more permanent structure at some point subject to further discussion with the planning department. Within the front garden an outdoor terrace will be created surrounded by low stone walls defining a private sitting area.



7. SUMMARY

Porthcressa Beach has been successfully regenerated over the last few years. There has been a substantial investment in the public open spaces and facilities. As architect / director in charge of the Isles of Scilly Council regeneration scheme I am aware of the high design standards set by the Council's development officers and the aspirations to create a real sense of place here. It is refreshing to see other private development following suit. A current example is the residential refurbishment of a cottage at the back of the Memorial Gardens by Bo Green (photo below). The new dormer windows with cedar cladding of the cheeks are elegant and fit neatly into the new slate roof.



Robert Francis hopes to continue this high standard of development with the revitalisation of 9 Little Porth. He intends to live in his new home for many years to come and is keen to create a property that he can be proud of. During the planning process we welcome any on-going dialogue with the planning department and look forward to working together to achieve a successful result.

Michael R Bradbury RIBA
20 September 2018