

84 St James's Avenue
Beckenham
Kent
BR3 4HQ
Nov 12th

Dear Sirs,

Re: Planning Application P/18/075; Bank Cottage, Bryher.

We write to express our significant reservations and concerns about the proposed development of Bank Cottage, which seems to us to be excessive in its scale, unsympathetic in its style and fundamentally contradictory in its declared aims.

We write as annual visitors to Bryher over many decades who have at different times stayed at Bank Cottage, Hell Bay Hotel, Kelyn Mor and Atlanta. Over these 30-plus years we have seen many minor and a few major changes in the housing stock on Bryher, but have always liked what we have seen in terms of the sympathetic approach and overall harmony that has resulted, in keeping with the palette of traditional styles seen across the island. We think particularly of the treatment of Samson Hill cottage ('The Doctor's') a few years back. This was effectively derelict, but was sympathetically rebuilt in traditional cottage style so it looks as though it has always been there. It has maintained its glorious views out over Green Bay without having to assert itself.

The island is a natural gem. Its many paths, hills and convoluted coastline mean that every inch of the island is seen from a variety of angles, and the priceless views are as much about the clusters of cottages nestling comfortably into the landscape as they are about the beaches, rocks, fields and surrounding sea. The modernist style of the proposed development is completely at variance with what is currently there or anywhere around it and would, to our minds, be an abrupt and incongruous interruption to the general view and to the island landscape.

Bank Cottage has developed gradually and sensitively over many years. The result is a building that is easy on the eye from every angle and fits comfortably and unostentatiously in its surroundings. When we stayed there we were amongst half a dozen or so visitors being comfortably accommodated in mostly en-suite rooms with a separate dining room and lounge. The cottage has been enlarged since then, so we struggle to see how it is now too small for just two full-time residents without almost doubling its footprint. We also note that in our upstairs bedroom we did not have a ceiling that was uncomfortably or awkwardly low. And the views from the bedroom window were amazing.

As visitors to Atlanta for over a decade, we know how much Bank Cottage already impedes views towards Great Par, and how much it blocks or reduces natural light from reaching Atlanta in the morning/early afternoon – and this is from the perspective of a summer-time experience. When the sun is lower in the sky in the winter months the effect must be far greater. The proposal to raise the Bank Cottage ridge by a full 4 feet would have a huge negative impact on Atlanta and its residents, be they holiday-makers in the season or residents in the winter. The motivation for raising the ridge height would seem to be to improve the views for the Bank Cottage occupants. The views are already perfect, providing you don't allow an internal conflict of interests to arise by planning an extension that immediately gets in your own way.

We note, too, the contrast with the rightly thoughtful emphasis on the low and unobtrusive development of the buildings within the garden, an approach that establishes the goal of having them sit at or below the height of the boundary. When contrasted with the intent to raise the ridge of the main house itself by 4 feet, however, this just does not seem like coherent overall thinking.

We note also, on the original Application Form at section 13, that there appears to be no clear plan for the handling of foul sewage. We are aware that there have in the past been issues with the management of sewage in the vicinity of Great Par, and suggest that this is not a matter that can be left unaddressed. It is a critical decision because of the impact to water quality and the negative olfactory effects that can often be registered on the track between Glenhope and Bank Cottage's garden.

Lastly, we would want to express concern over the benchmarking effect that this development might have on future planning applications. Were this development allowed it might open the doors to further similar applications that collectively would be a blight on the landscape of this currently beautiful island.

Yours faithfully,

Bill and Melinda Tucker