

## Design and Access Statement

Application for new dwelling at:

Men-a-Vaur, Church Road, TR21 0NA, St Mary's.

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*Prepared by:*

Selleck Nicholls Ltd  
Polhilsa  
Stoke Climsland  
Callington  
PL17 8PP

*Telephone:*

01579 370 740

*Email:* [aselleck@sellecknicholls.co.uk](mailto:aselleck@sellecknicholls.co.uk)

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**1. Design Statement****1.1 Proposal: New dwelling.**

The proposal is for holiday let accommodation that incorporates provision of ground floor level access accommodation for visitors of impaired mobility. The property is designed for the use of a multi-generational party of visitors or group with and without impaired mobility. The property is also designed with a single storey one bedroom element that can be let independently from the two storey property providing flexible accommodation to ensure viability. The design concept has been reached on the basis that the topography of the whole site and its approach via Branksea Close is level, and relatively level access can be made to the remainder of Hugh Town. This topographical information informed the design and further research demonstrated that provision of letting accommodation for disabled visitors to the Islands was extremely restricted and questions raised that the standard of that accommodation does not meet the current day aspirations which would be expected by able bodied visitors. Clearly this site provides a valuable if not unique opportunity within the Isles of Scilly to demonstrably improve the quality of the existing accommodation in this regard and contribute to the diversification of the Islands' economy.

**1.2 Planning: Planning Engagement.**

The application is subsequent to a pre application meeting between Lisa Walton Senior Officer of The Isles of Scilly Council and the applicant on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. A formal planning pre-application enquiry which was submitted on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The result of the pre-application was a qualified recognition that the principle of development was acceptable and encouragement was conveyed for the applicant to bring forward a scheme of affordable housing potentially supported by a measure of cross subsidy from open market housing based upon viability. Therefore a high density scheme of five two and three bedroomed houses has been prepared in accordance with this clear direction of the Council, the design is very similar in nature to the design submitted with the pre application however now encompassing all the additional specific detailed requirements set out in the pre application response and has been consulted upon with surrounding residents.

A further stream of advice was received within the pre application response and additional emailed correspondence dated 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018 in relation to the suitability of the site for holiday let accommodation. The qualified response in this respect was policy based and justification for residential development of this site for use as holiday let accommodation was firmly placed back on the applicant to demonstrate that the proposal complied with Policy 4 in particular criteria A & B. The applicant has prepared a scheme compliant with policy 4 and as encouraged within the pre application response consulted with neighbouring properties providing both designs for their consideration.

The result of the consultation meetings was very clear in that there was a universal lack of support for the scheme of affordable housing with concerns over density, parking and other issues expressed. However the meetings were broadly supportive of the scheme for holiday let accommodation with an element of provision for visitors with

impaired mobility. Several attendees and other residents who made contact after the meeting stated specific requirements for this type of accommodation which seems sadly lacking elsewhere.

This is how the application addresses Policy 4 of criteria A & B

Criteria (a) states *"where such development contributes to the further diversification and essential modernisation of the islands' economy; or* "We submit that the design that provides facilities that are not readily available elsewhere for level access together with bedroom and bathroom facilities for visitors of impaired mobility especially to holiday as part of a wider group clearly demonstrates a diversification and modernisation of the Islands' economy.

With regard to criteria (b) this states *" where it demonstrably improves the quality of existing tourist accommodation, including that of managed camping sites, or potentially extends the length of the tourist season; or"* we regard that this criteria is also satisfied as the facilities being proposed are of a high quality standard throughout not least in that they provide dedicated individual ensuite accommodation to the same high standard for impaired mobility visitors as would be expected by able bodied visitors with the addition of widened doors, wet room floors and necessary mobility aids such as support rails clearly this demonstrably improves the standard over the limited existing tourist accommodation.

A further pre-application was submitted in November 2018 and was responded to by Kieran Reeves of Exmoor National Park planning authority on behalf of the Isles of Scilly Council on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

Mr Reeves advised a positive view of the proposals he stated that *"Overall, the proposed development would appear to satisfy with a number of policies within the Local Plan and draft emerging Local Plan."*

Mr Reeves did reinforce the need for local housing by going on to state *"within the emerging local plan there is a strong emphasis regarding the need to provide Affordable Housing or Local Needs Housing and I would encourage you to consider using this site to provide much needed local housing."* In response I would reiterate that we have considered the use of the site for this purpose and have designed an alternative scheme along these lines however for the reasons given following consultation with the neighbouring properties this is not a scheme that would be supported by them. Clearly the overall burden for the provision of affordable housing is upon the local authority who are preparing a substantial scheme at Carn Thomas.

Mr Reeves highlighted 5 points where he would seek an improvement in the design which we have addressed within the full application which are:-

1. The roof pitch of the single storey element has been reduced in both planes to address the concerns raised.
2. The Chimney breast has been incorporated within the superstructure to clean up the elevation.
3. The addition of embossed perimeter detailing around openings has been incorporated in a contrasting colour to break up the rendered finish.
4. The fascia box end details has been adjusted to show a pitched eaves detail.
5. With regard to the concerns raised in relation to the openings facing onto the gable of adjoining properties I draw your attention to drawing 2050.202 which shows a ghost image of the two gable ends of the adjoining properties, in context with the proposed elevations. It is clear only the ground floor bedroom of the single storey element is affected in the way described which in actuality looks out on an existing mature hedge and is of limited detriment to the enjoyment of the accommodation. In fact the arrangement of the accommodation has

been carefully arranged to take advantage of the open landscape to the east between existing buildings facing onto Branksea Close.

1.3 Situation: Land To South of Men a Vaur Church Road, St Mary's, TR21 0NA.

The application site which is highlighted edged in red on the site location plan in the past has been used as a significant sized garden to Men a Vaur, however in recent years it has fallen into disrepair whilst Men a Vaur was used as staff accommodation by a local Hotel. The House itself together with part of the garden which has been subdivided was renovated in 2017 and has become a successful holiday let, the remainder of the site now subject to this application is superfluous to the needs of the holiday let.

1.4 Applicant: Mr Andrew Selleck is owner of the holiday let Men a Vaur adjacent to the application site which is highlighted blue within the site location plan

## **2. Site Location**

The site is located to the south of Men a Vaur on Church Road and to the west of Branksea Close. The buildings to the east are predominantly established permanent residential houses however to the north many of the properties on Church Road including Men a Vaur and Rosvean House immediately adjacent the application site and several properties to the south and of the west on Rams Valley are residential holiday lets and guest house accommodation and it is considered therefore that the proposed use is not in conflict with the established settlement pattern. It is noted that the site is located within a conservation area, and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



*Fig 1. Existing hedge East side of site*



*Fig 2. Existing fence North side of site*

## **3. Building Form & Layout**

The proposal has a single storey element graduating into the site to reduce its visual impact on the locality from the north to the south with a link to a two storey aspect of the design. Careful consideration has been made within

the design to the existing properties, windows and doors have been located carefully to prevent loss of privacy to the surrounding dwellings especially to the west of the application site.

Within the design we have fully considered guidance provided within the Isles of Scilly Design Guide, the client is keen to keep the proposal traditional and sensitive to the heritage of the area. The walls will be principally of painted render with natural slate sills and embossed lintels. The roofs will be typically pitched using natural slate and pan tiles over the link. Some limited use of vertical boarding provides relief to the link and will be integrated in the design as an emerging vernacular.

The link will try to give the dwelling a contemporary though respectful look and bring natural light and independence to both sides of the property.

#### **4. Access**

The existing access off Church Road via Branksea Close is not proposed to be altered and has established street lighting. A new pedestrian point of access is proposed off Branksea Close in accordance with the plans attached. No vehicle parking spaces are proposed as parking provision is not envisaged as necessary for holiday let accommodation; however, service vehicles can adopt temporary parking on Church Road.



*Fig 3. Dust cart accessing Branksea Close, to East side of Men-a-Vaur (July 2018)*

Branksea Close has substantially improved commercial vehicle access since work was undertaken by the applicant in 2017 to remove trees and overgrowth on the boundary between Men a Vaur and Branksea Close therefore providing suitable access for commercial size service and emergency vehicles.

Access within the proposed site will be level to all areas and throughout the ground floor of the building. All doors will be widened to 915mm rather than conventional door widths of 762mm or 838mm to provide suitable access for wheelchairs.

#### **5. Ecology**

The application will respect the existing trees and as many as possible will be retained around the perimeter of the site. The species are generally not native, however it should be noted that some trees specifically a Pohutukawa tree (New Zealand Christmas Tree) and some apple and pear trees as shown on the topographical survey will need to be removed in order for the building to be erected.

#### **6. Foul Drainage & Flood Risk**

This site is not at risk of flooding as it is in flood zone 1



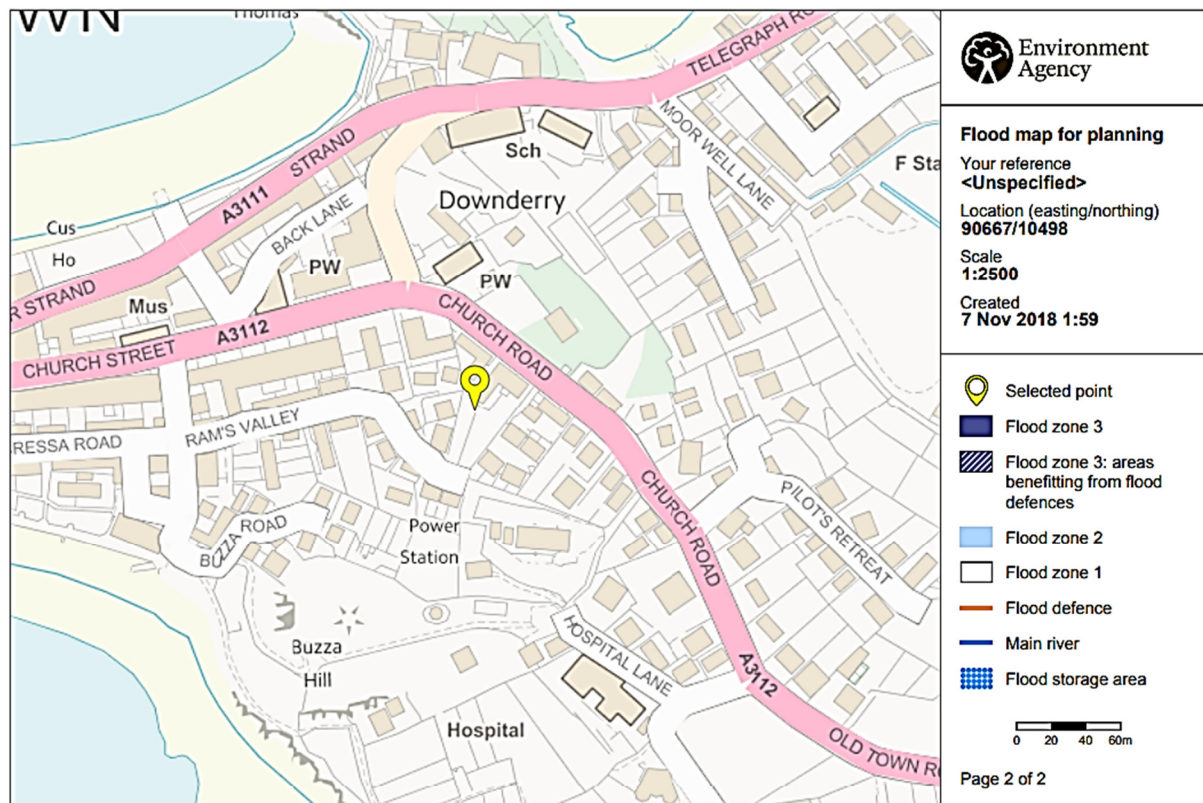


Fig 4. Floor map of the area

**Your selected location is in flood zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding.**

Foul drainage will be connected to the public sewer, the applicant has as requested within the pre application response contacted Eddie Williams on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018 who kindly provided information on the sewerage network and confirmed there are no known capacity issues with the drainage infrastructure.

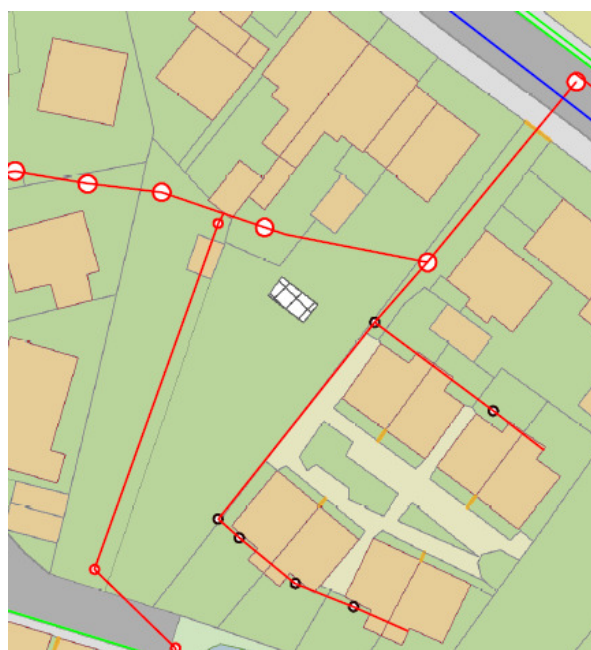


Fig 5. Sewerage network showing takes for proposed property

## **7. Sustainability**

The superstructure of the building is proposed to be of Timber Framed construction the timber sourced from sustainable sources, the impact on the environment being substantially reduced when compared to alternative energy hungry materials such as cement rich concrete products.

Energy use will be minimised by a fabric first design approach it is therefore proposed to super insulate the building fabric encompassing the merits of solar gain through south facing glazed openings and ensuring energy reduction measures such as utilisation of 100% of lighting is LED.

Potable Water use will be designed to be restricted to 120l/p/day by use of water reducing measures such as WC Cistern size flow reducers on taps etc.

Space heating is proposed to be through an air source heat pump or energy efficient panel heaters combined with photo voltaic panels to generate power. Secondary space heating through a functioning chimney is proposed.