

## **Proposed Staff Dwelling tied to Vineyard Business**

St Martin's Vineyard

## **Design and Access Statement**

- The proposal is for the erection of a staff dwelling on St Martin's Vineyard. This would be a small, single-storey residential unit of timber construction on a steel frame base. Excavation and permanent infrastructure requirements would be restricted to a 225mm concrete slab 'raft' foundation to site the unit.
- The application is designed to provide an affordable and comfortable accommodation solution for the applicants who will take on a Farm Business Tenancy to continue the running of St Martin's vineyard upon the retirement of the current owners. The current owners will continue to live in their existing home on the island and there is a lack of alternative affordable open market housing or available rental properties which would provide appropriate housing for the applicants.
- The unit would measure 8m x 4m with an internal ceiling height of 3m and an external height to roof apex of 3.75m. The unit would be clad externally with oak boarding with a pitched, cedar shingle roof. Insulation of walls, floor and ceiling would be to a high standard throughout with all windows and doors including double glazing. Access would be through a double-door at the front of the unit with an additional single door on the rear of the unit to provide access to a private garden space. Windows would be situated on the front and gable ends of the unit with additional dormer windows on the front aspect to maximise the feeling of space within the dwelling and maximise natural light. Two small conservation-style roof lights on the south-facing roof pitch would provide further natural light into the unit. Rainwater collection and storage would be included to collect runoff from the roof for use in the kitchen garden.
- The internal accommodation would comprise a kitchen, a bathroom and shower, a double bed and a seating area. Underfloor heating and an instant electric water heater would provide facilities. Water would be sourced from the existing borehole and pump/filtration system within the vineyard and power would be supplied through the existing three-phase vineyard connection. Foul and grey water would be disposed of using the existing septic tank which serves the vineyard, through a connection point adjacent to the winery – it is understood that the existing system will easily accommodate the additional burden but minor upgrades would secure this if required. There are ongoing investigations into the scope and potential to install solar power generation and battery storage on the Vineyard which would allow a large degree of the power to the unit to be renewable in time.
- The proposed site for the dwelling would be on an existing under-used area of the vineyard, which is not under agricultural production but is used as an informal storage area for machinery and equipment. The proposed location would not require the removal of any trees or shrubs aside from individual young olive trees which are in poor condition.
- The proposed site would ensure that built development within the vineyard remains focussed on the southern edge where the new dwelling would form a cohesive component of the existing vineyard infrastructure. This includes the winery, the shop and tractor shed, the electric shed, and the proposed holiday let units which are subject to a separate application. The proposed dwelling would match the existing size, shape and massing of vineyard buildings already present in the vicinity and the timber clad finish would complement the existing building stock.
- The dwelling would be situated such that a kitchen and horticultural garden could be developed to the north, providing fresh produce for the applicants as well as allowing for the development of vegetation to screen the dwelling from the visitor areas of the vineyard and ensure privacy and separation between the areas of the vineyard open for tours or shop access; and private staff dwelling area of the vineyard.
- The site is currently screened to the south, east and west by pittosporum hedges between 5-8m high. The northern boundary is open to the vineyard itself—the proposed kitchen garden would be sited here. The land form means that there is no visibility from higher ground on the island, except possibly oblique glimpses from the upper storeys of dwellings to the north-west. However this would be significantly softened and screened by vegetation, and would be seen within the framing of the intervening built development including the vineyard shop, winery and storage shed. The unit would not be visible from the access track which runs to the south of the vineyard along the coastline, or from any public footpaths or open public space.
- Access to the dwelling would be via the existing vineyard gate which would provide easy, level access to the dwelling.

## ILLUSTRATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS

**External Finishings (illustrative)**

The unit shown above represents the proposed external finishing with oak timber cladding, hardwood ground floor and dormer windows (paint and finish TBC) and cedar roof tiles. The dimensions and layout of this unit differ from our proposed layout - see Elevations plan for more information.

**Notes:** As the unit would be built and furnished to a custom specification rather than an off-the-shelf solution, these images are sourced from various similar projects by the same manufacturer to provide an illustration of the proposed construction and finish. Discrepancies and inconsistencies between the images themselves, and the elevations/floor plans presented in this application reflect the illustrative-only nature of the images.

**Internal (illustrative)**

The construction allows for the creation of a small mezzanine above the toilet, providing useful additional storage space. A false ceiling would be created above the dormer window frame to provide additional space for insulation.

**Bathroom & Kitchen (illustrative)**

The bathroom would be situated below the mezzanine, with the kitchen along the front facing aspect.



# Proposed Staff Dwelling - Visibility and Landscape Impact

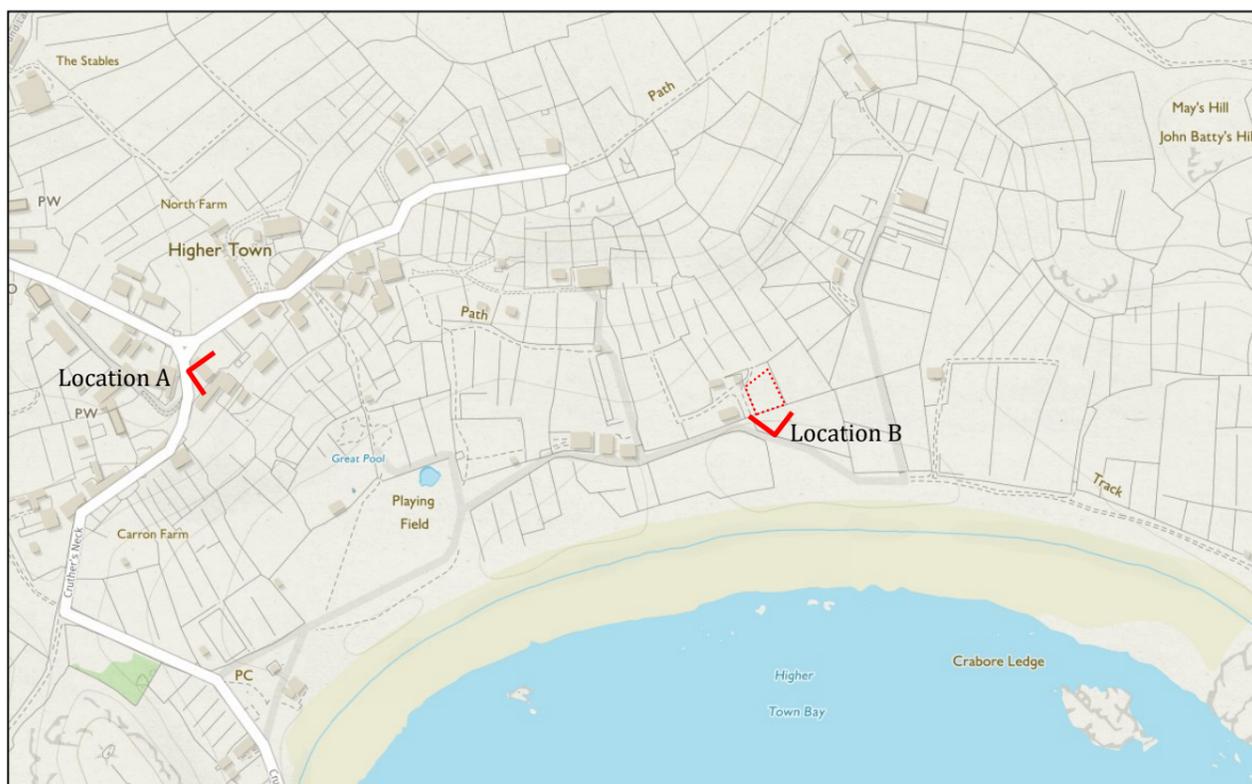
## VISIBILITY AND LANDSCAPE IMPACT



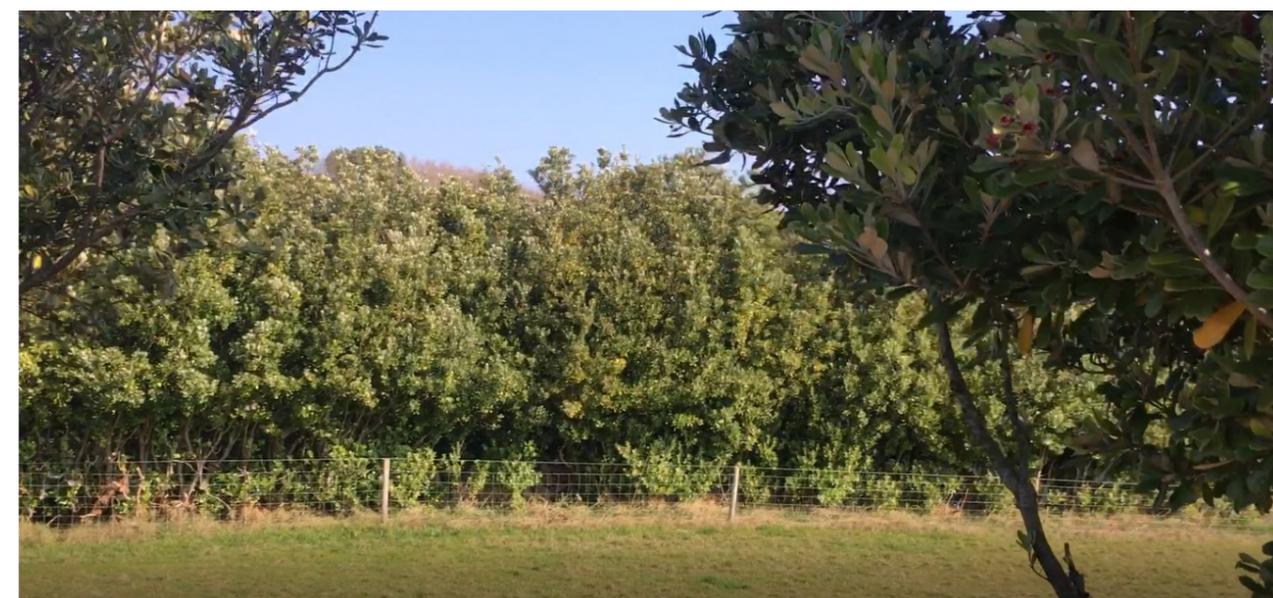
Photograph taken from the south-eastern edge of Higher Town (**Location A**) showing no visibility of the proposed location from the town due to screening by pittosporum hedges. Indicative location (behind the pittosporum hedge) shown in orange.



Photograph taken from the proposed location of the dwelling itself looking north. The high pittosporum hedges prevent any visibility of the location to the south, east and west. Visibility is only within the vineyard land itself, except for potential for glimpses from upper floor windows at Little Arthurs farm situated behind the vineyard shed.



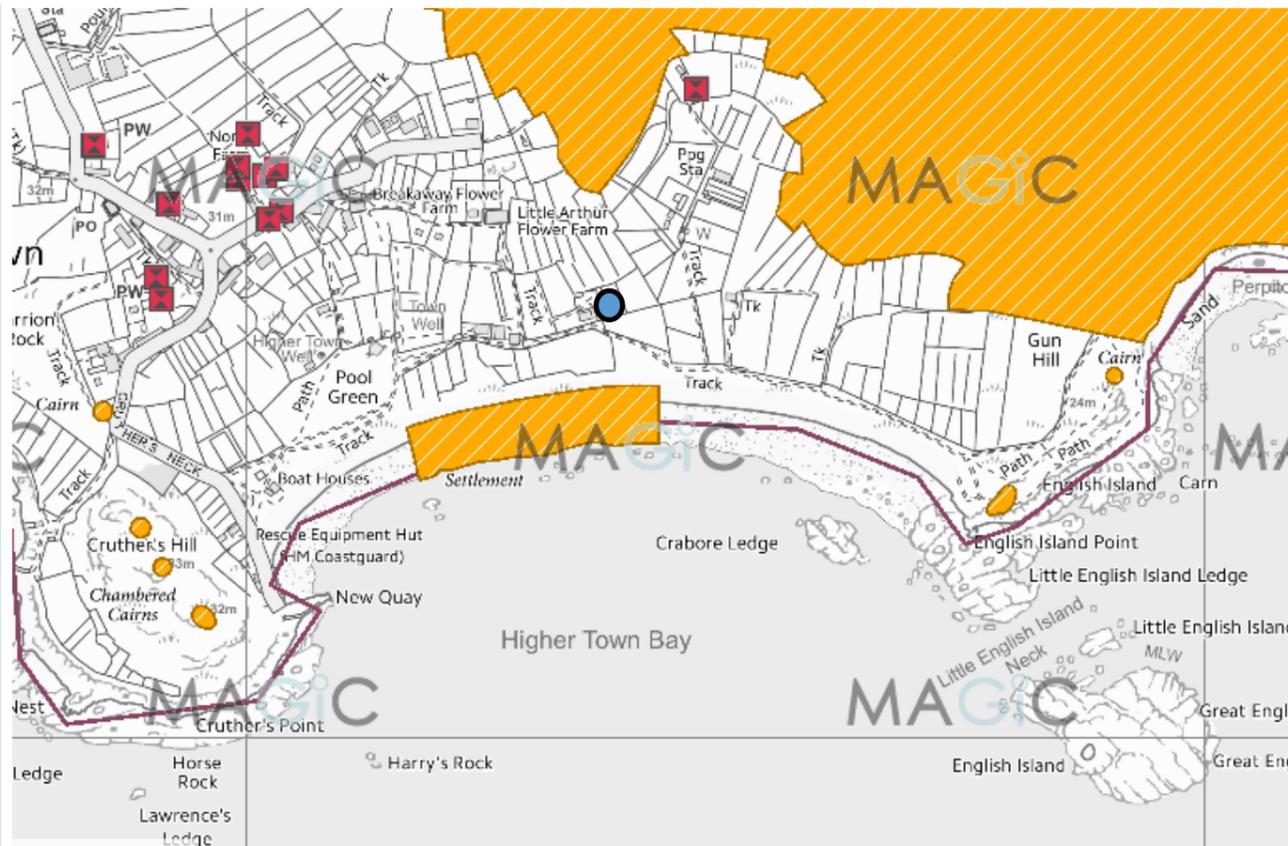
OS plan showing the locations of the two viewpoints along with the site indicated by the red dotted line. The lie of the land, coupled with the pittosporum hedges which surround the proposed location, mean that no other viewpoints are considered necessary. The only additional visibility would be from within landholding of the vineyard itself, or potentially from adjacent agricultural fields which were not accessed.



Photograph showing the view from the track to the south (Location B) —the 6m high pittosporum hedges would completely obscure visibility of the dwelling from the south.

## Proposed Staff Dwelling - Relevant Designations

# RELEVANT DESIGNATIONS



Illustrating historic and heritage designations in the vicinity of the site taken from the MAGIC website. Orange hatching shows Scheduled Monuments whilst the red squares show Grade II Listed Buildings. The blue dot illustrates the proposed siting of the dwelling.

### Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The Isles of Scilly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a designation which covers the whole of the Isles of Scilly. The Council's statutory duty is to produce and review a management plan for the AONB to demonstrate how the AONB can be protected and enhanced. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) were created by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and, along with National Parks, they represent the finest examples of countryside in England and Wales. The Isles of Scilly were designated an AONB in 1975. Natural England states that:

*'The primary purpose is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. In pursuing this primary purpose, the needs of agriculture, forestry, and other rural industries, and of the economic and social needs of local communities, should be taken into account. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development, which in themselves conserve and enhance the environment. Recreation is not an objective, but the demand for recreation should be met in so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.'*

### Historic and Heritage Assets

The proposed site for the dwelling is not subject to any heritage or historic designations, however consideration of impacts upon these assets can include changes to the setting of the asset as well as direct impacts to the assets themselves.

- The Scheduled Monument "Prehistoric to Romano-British ritual, funerary and settlement remains on Par Beach, St Martin's" lies to the south;
- The Scheduled Monument "Prehistoric cairns, field system and settlements, medieval chapel and post-medieval daymark, lookout and signal station on north east St Martin's" lies to the north
- Three Scheduled Monuments "Prehistoric entrance grave, on Crutther's Hill, St Martin's" lie to the south-west;
- The Scheduled Monument "Platform cairn on Crutther's Neck, St Martin's" lies to the west;
- The Scheduled Monument "Prehistoric house platform settlement south west of English Island Carn, St Martin's" lies to the east;
- The Grade II Listed "Barn at Little Arthur's Farm" lies to the north-east;
- Various Grade II listed buildings are associated with Higher Town to the north-east including the Methodist Church, Corner Cottage, the Telephone Kiosk and Rock Cottage in closest proximity.

The siting and screening of the dwelling would not have any direct impact on the visual setting of any of the sites located.

### Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other wildlife conservation designations

The proposed site for the dwelling is not itself subject to any wildlife or other conservation designations such as SSSI, SPA or SAC.

Such designations do exist in the local environs; these include St Martin's Sedimentary Shore SSSI to the west and Chapel Down SSSI to the north-east. Areas of the islands are also subject to higher level designations such as the Isles of Scilly RAMSAR and SPA sites.

The proposals would not result in any direct impacts to these sites.

### Conservation Area

In 1975 the whole of the Isles of Scilly was designated as a Conservation Area making it the only local authority area covered entirely by a single designation. This recognises the integration of the buildings and landscape in Scilly and how man has shaped the land over a long period. The Council has a duty to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and to protect features of special architectural or historic interest. Responsibility for conservation lies with the Planning Department of the Council of the Isles of Scilly.

## Proposed Staff Dwelling - Consideration of Proposals in the context of Emerging Local Plan Policy LC4

### Local Plan Status

At the time of writing, the outgoing Adopted Local Plan (2005) is still active; however the emerging Local Plan (2015—2030) is at the final stage of public consultation, therefore whilst both plans are referred to where relevant, greater reliance is placed on the Emerging Local Plan in the considerations below.

### Policy LC4

The key policy of relevance to these proposals is considered to be LC4 which relates to Staff Accommodation for Businesses. Consideration of each element of this policy has driven the design and layout of the proposals submitted in this application. The policy states that:

(1) New staff accommodation for businesses and organisations will be permitted where:

- a) an appraisal is submitted demonstrating that there is a functional and operational need for the proposed accommodation that cannot be met by existing suitable accommodation available in the area; and
- b) the size and type of the proposed accommodation is appropriate to the functional and operational needs of the business or organisation; and
- c) the proposed accommodation is located within or adjacent to the existing business, or well-related to the physical form of an existing settlement or group of existing buildings, or involves the re-use of an existing building.

(2) All staff accommodation permitted will be subject to occupancy restrictions. In addition to the above, seasonal staff accommodation will only be permitted where it:

- d) is located in an area that relates well to the business where possible, with the exception of the re-use of buildings; and
- e) does not cause harm to residential amenity through staff working unsociable hours.

(3) Where staff accommodation is required for a new business, the development will only be supported where it is demonstrated that the business is viable in the long term, supported by a business plan for a minimum of five years.

### Response to Local Policy Requirements

With regards to requirement 1(a) - consideration of the functional and operational need for the proposed staff accommodation, with reference to the ability for this need to be met by existing suitable accommodation available in the area, is provided on the following page (Page 7) of this Design and Access Statement.

With regards to requirement 1(b) - it is considered that the size and scale of the proposed accommodation solution is appropriate to provide comfortable year-round accommodation for the applicants running the vineyard business.

With regards to requirement 1(c) - the proposed staff dwelling would be sited within the vineyard landholding and positioned such that built development within the vineyard remains focussed on the southern edge where the new dwelling would form a cohesive component of the existing vineyard infrastructure. This existing infrastructure includes the winery, the shop and tractor shed, the electric shed, and the proposed holiday let units which are subject to a separate application. The proposed dwelling would match the existing size, shape and massing of vineyard buildings already present in the vicinity and the timber clad finish would complement the existing building stock.

As the proposed staff dwelling would provide year-round accommodation for the applicants, the criteria within Section 2 of this Policy relating to seasonal staff accommodation would not be applicable to these proposals. Similarly, Section 3 of this policy relates to a new business rather than the continuation of an ongoing business (the vineyard has been in operation since 1996) and therefore these criteria would not be applicable to these proposals.

## Proposed Staff Dwelling - Requirement for Staff Dwelling

### APPRAISAL OF FUNCTIONAL & OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR STAFF DWELLING

- We (the applicants) are proposing to take on a Farm Business Tenancy to run St Martin's Vineyard. The current owners of the vineyard who established the business in 1996 are looking to retire from running the vineyard and have advertised for new tenants to take on the business. Following discussions with the current owners, and the landlords (the Duchy of Cornwall), we are proposing to relocate to St Martin's to take on the tenancy. As such, the application is submitted with reference to the current Local Plan Policy LC4 regarding Staff Accommodation.
- Although the current owners of the vineyard are retiring, they will continue to live on the island; therefore the availability of the business tenancy does not infer the availability of associated accommodation.
- It is essential for the running of the vineyard that the applicants are able to live on St Martin's. This represents a fundamental functional and operational requirement for some form of staff accommodation to be secured on the island.
- At the present time, there are two properties for sale on St Martin's which seek offers in the region of £450,000 or higher; the average house price on the island is listed as £438,500. The high cost of open market property means that this would not represent a feasible option for relocation to run the vineyard.
- We also understand that there is currently a long waiting list for rental properties on St Martin's, with a number of high-priority applicants such as key workers on the island. We would therefore like to seek a solution where our relocation to the island would not affect existing housing stock and availability if possible.
- Our solution would be to erect a staff dwelling within the vineyard, tied through Planning Condition to the operation of the vineyard and appropriate to the needs of the business. A precedent for this has been set by the business to the west who erected a single-storey 66m<sup>2</sup> floorspace staff dwelling in 2017—application reference P-18-080.
- The Deputy Land Agent of the Duchy of Cornwall has advised that the Duchy, as the landlords, would support this proposal subject to appropriate design and finishing.
- In addition to the fundamental feasibility reasons outlined above, there are operational reasons why a dwelling on the vineyard would be desirable. A tandem application has been made for 2x holiday let units to support the vineyard business which would be sited on the vineyard itself. It would be beneficial for the applicants to be able to live on the site in order to be able to meet the requirements of guests staying on the vineyard during the summer season, and to service the holiday accommodation.
- The Business Strategy for the vineyard includes obtaining certified organic status following the appropriate conversion period. This will require a high level of vine monitoring and vigilance for pest and fungal pathogens to permit a quick response time to deal with any outbreaks. It will also require pre-emptive measures such as canopy control and water spraying at times when the weather and atmospheric conditions would indicate the likelihood of fungal outbreaks due to temperature, airflow and humidity conditions. The situation of the staff dwelling on the vineyard itself would be invaluable to allow the regular monitoring of the crops, and passive monitoring of site-specific microclimate conditions, to minimise the risk of crop damage/loss which could arise.
- Furthermore, the proposal for a dwelling tied to the vineyard business would also serve to secure the future of the vineyard. The business could subsequently be offered for potential applicants as a going concern with a tied dwelling house. The vineyard makes an important contribution to the local food and produce sector, as well as providing a popular visitor attraction on St Martin's offering tours and tastings. Measures such as the provision of an associated staff dwelling which secure the long-term viability and sustainability of this business for the future would be of benefit to the island community and economy.

## Proposed Staff Dwelling - Local Policy Considerations

# LOCAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

### Policies relating to Scale and Ambition with regards to Setting and Existing Development Patterns

**Policy SS2** supports development proposals which respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational treatment, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate any new buildings into their local setting. The policy also aims to protect both existing residents of adjacent properties and future occupants of proposed properties by requiring proposals to safeguard the amenity of existing occupiers and create a high quality environment for future occupiers that addresses issues of privacy, overlooking, overshadowing and/or any overbearing impacts. **Policy OE1** supports this, stating that development will only be permitted where they would not cause significant harm to the character, quality, distinctiveness or sensitivity of the landscape. **Policy OE3** requires the design and location of new development to take into account the form, scale, size and massing of nearby buildings, together with materials of construction.

#### Response to Local Policy Requirements

The scale and ambition of the dwelling would be modest - it would form an adjunct to the existing group of buildings which constitutes the vineyard. It would not therefore represent a significant extension of the existing development line, nor represent a novel component within the landscape. Rather it would represent an addition to the existing assemblage and, as it would be tied to the vineyard, it would form an intrinsic component of the agricultural business.

In terms of size - the dwelling proposed is considered to be the minimum required to provide comfortable long-term accommodation for two people. The proposed dwelling would have a smaller footprint (32m<sup>2</sup>) that the recently approved Staff Accommodation (64m<sup>2</sup>) erected in an equivalent position at the adjacent business through application P/17/080.

The proposed style of build is appropriate to a residential dwelling within an agricultural setting. The Deputy Land Agent at the Duchy of Cornwall has inspected these proposals and, subject to refinement of style and design, is happy that the proposals are appropriate to the site.

The proposed location would not impact upon any adjacent residential or business properties in terms of amenity or issues of privacy; the setting would also remain appropriate for future occupiers if the vineyard business and tied property were taken on by new owners.

### Policies relating to Water Use and Management

**Policy SS2** supports proposals which reduce pressure on water resources and increase reuse by incorporating effective water management measures, including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, green roofs and water conservation, efficiency and rain and grey water harvesting measures. **Policy SS6** further supports measures such as rainwater harvesting.

#### Response to Local Policy Requirements

The dwelling would have rainwater harvesting built into the design with runoff collected in water butts.

### Policies relating to the use of Natural Materials

**Policy SS2** supports the use of natural, sustainable materials and styles that compliment those found in the local area; requires new builds to match the style, character, size etc. of their environment; requires new builds to respect the character of the site; and promotes the use of locally sourced, recycled or low carbon materials in construction where they are available and represent a viable option.

#### Response to Local Policy Requirements

The design would maximise the use of natural materials such as timber with glass elements to ensure that the dwelling has a rustic, natural feel which would fit well into the existing landscape and be in-keeping with the vineyard which would remain the primary function of the land. With regards to Policy SS2 therefore, the environment is considered to be the vineyard primarily with residential dwelling on St Martin's more generally as the wider environment.

### Policies relating to Land Use

**Policy SS1** requires proposals to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land, whilst **Policy SS2** encourages the efficient use of the land whilst respecting the character of the site.

#### Response to Local Policy Requirements

The proposed siting is in an under-used area of the vineyard. This land is not considered suitable for growing vines due to the gradient and topography, and is therefore likely to continue to be underused whilst the vineyard occupies the site. The siting of the dwelling within the area of the vineyard already supporting buildings would maintain the existing balance of land use in an efficient manner without extending this into agricultural areas.

### Policies relating to Landscape and Visual Impact

**Policy SS1** requires the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, whilst **Policy SS2** focuses on respecting and reinforcement of the area's character and identity. **Policy OE1** states that development should not cause significant harm to the character, quality, distinctiveness or sensitivity of the landscape, or to important features or views, or other perceptual qualities such as tranquillity and dark skies; This is supported further by **Policy OE3** which reiterates the status of all of the islands as a Conservation Area and states that proposals must conserve and enhance the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting.

#### Response to Local Policy Requirements

The assessment presented in this DAS demonstrates that the setting will have negligible visual impact outside of the vineyard landholding itself where it will form an integral and cohesive component of the existing buildings and business.

## Proposed Staff Dwelling - Further Considerations with regards Validation Checklist

# FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### Wildlife Survey and Report

The proposed site of the dwelling is an under-used area of the vineyard which is used for casual storage.

The sward is a mix of typical mesotrophic meadow species with a number of young olive saplings and some existing vegetable beds.

The hedges are likely to support nesting birds during the breeding season; the timing of any works which may cause direct impacts, or indirect disturbance, to nesting birds would be scheduled outside of the breeding season (mid-March to end-August inclusive).

No further protected species are identified at this site.

### Flood Risk

The proposed location of the dwelling is more than 5m above sea level and a flood risk assessment is not therefore considered to be required as part of this application. This accords with Policy SS7 of the Emerging Local Plan.

### Infrastructure Impact Assessment

The vineyard has an existing electricity supply provided by Western Power. The dwelling would represent a relatively minor addition to the existing burden and it is understood that this could be easily accommodated by extending the existing infrastructure from the shed where the power connects to the vineyard approximately 20m south to the new unit. We are working as part of the St Martin's consortium of businesses to install solar power and battery storage on the vineyard which would increase the capacity of the system to supply the modest additional power requirements of the dwelling.

The existing borehole on the vineyard is understood to have sufficient capacity to supply water to the dwelling. The existing UV filtration system is understood to be sufficient - testing will be undertaken to ensure that the water supply meets required standards for residential use and the filtration upgraded if required.

The vineyard has an existing septic tank and soakaway system which is understood to be over-specified for the current requirements of the site. It is therefore anticipated that this system has sufficient capacity to manage the foul and grey water arisings from the proposed Staff Dwelling, or minor upgrades could secure this if required. A connection point to the existing system adjacent to the Winery would be used.

There is no hardstanding proposed aside from the foundation, and runoff from the roof would be collected/stored in the first instance, or dealt with via SUDS—no runoff of rain or surface water to the septic tank system is proposed.

### Fire Safety

The Island Fire Service have confirmed that access to the vineyard is sufficient and the distance from the vineyard buildings to the dwelling would meet their requirement for proximity. Existing water storage from rainwater collection on the vineyard would be sufficient to also meet this requirement for the dwelling.

### Site Waste Management

Waste arisings from the construction phase are anticipated to be close to zero, through the use of a pre-fabricated unit which would be constructed and completed on site. Any arisings from excavations for foundation would be retained on site and incorporated into the levels.

Waste arisings from the dwelling would be collected alongside the vineyard collection. This would avoid the need for additional kerbside collection points associated with the dwelling.

### Archaeological Assessment

It is not considered that further archaeological assessment would be required for this site on the basis of the following considerations:

- 1) The level of excavation proposed is restricted to concrete raft foundation. This represents a minimal excavation or impact.
- 2) The staff dwelling at the adjacent business (Planning Application P-18-080) was constructed without requirement for archaeological conditions due to the evidence presented by the applicant regarding the ground conditions. Their site was on blown sand which is understood (see map inset) to be the same superficial geology as the site of the proposed dwelling on the vineyard. The Cornwall Archaeology Unit (CAU) subsequently withdrew their request stating that there are *"unlikely to be any archaeological remains here due to the depth of blown sand and the limited depth of the foundation level"*. We would suggest that this advice is likely to be equally applicable to the vineyard site.



### Lighting Assessment

The proposals would not involve exterior lighting, nor significant areas of glazing which would allow light spill from the interior of the dwelling.

It is not therefore considered that further lighting assessment would be required for this application.

### Tree Survey

The proposed dwelling would not be within range of any trees, aside from those woody shrubs which comprise the pittosporum hedges. Individual young (<10 year old) olive trees in poor condition occur close to the site—individual saplings may require removal.

No hedgerow removal for access would be required.

The proposed location of the dwelling is a minimum 4.9m away from the hedge. This would ensure that there is no digging in close proximity to any hedgerow, and there would be sufficient stand-off to ensure that encroachment into the RPA is <10% which accords with BS:5837 (2012) requirements.

### Landscaping

The proposed landscaping is provided in the Layout Plan - if additional information is required, we can provide this during the Determination Period, or details can be secured by Condition if required.