

BLOCKHOUSE COTTAGES, TRESCO

DESIGN, ACCESS & PLANNING STATEMENT

Contents & Introduction

1. Introduction	p 2
2. Background and relevant planning history	p 3
3. Primary Legislation and Planning Policy	p 3
4. Context and Existing Buildings	p 5
5. Design, Scale, Massing and Materials	p 7
9. Impact upon the character of the Conservation Area, the AONB and the Historic Environment	p 9
7. Sustainability Assessment	p10
8. Energy Strategy	p10
9. Impact on the Natural Environment	p 12
10. Flood Risk	p 12
11. Access	p 13
12. Conclusion	p 13
Appendix I - Schedule of Areas	

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Blockhouse Cottages (Google Maps 2021)

I. Introduction

This statement supports a planning application to replace the existing Blockhouse Cottages located on Tresco, with a single self-contained unit with 5 bedrooms. The proposals also include a single bed annexe, an independent studio building and associated landscape alterations.

In line with Local Plan policy, the Tresco Estate Partnership is seeking to, 'maximise the quality of its tourism offering and provide an offer that appeals to a range of visitors, including creating new tourism markets and niches'

The existing cottages are not tied in their use, but their current condition and marginal standard of habitability has meant that they have typically been used as last choice accommodation for seasonal island workers (summer only). This application is made concurrently with an application for 8no. additional staff units at New Grimsby to replace and supplement worker accommodation.

On Tresco, there is a shortage of large, high quality rental properties that cater for families and bigger groups. Changing tourism patterns have created a demand for this type of accommodation.

The proposals would provide a single self-catered unit with 5 double bedrooms, each with a dedicated ensuite bathroom, and shared spaces, including a large drawing room, a kitchen and dining space, and compact spa facilities. There is also capacity / flexibility to house an additional 2 guests in the snug.

A separate studio, formed by extending the outbuilding located in the garden, would provide space to accommodate specialist led residential courses, including conferences, lecture series and seminars, demonstrations, art classes, meditation, yoga and exercise classes for groups of up to 12.

A separate annexe building, in the form of a traditional, low slung, Scilly pilot gig shed, located to the west of the site is proposed to provide additional accommodation for course leaders, or visiting or permanent staff servicing the new accommodation.

The proposed building would enable the estate to provide a form of accommodation that does not currently exist on the island; a single building that can cater for large groups and / or specialist activities in one self-catered complex with dedicated staff. The proposed building would provide the opportunity for specialist expert led holidays, such activities help to extend tourism into the shoulder seasons. Alternatively the new dwelling would also enable several groups, families or generations of the same family to stay together in a single property.

The proposed works form part of the Tresco Estate's policy for ongoing investment in improved accommodation for visitors to the island. Flexibility and diversification within the tourist offering strengthens the estate's business model and extends the season. Investment on Tresco has a direct economic benefit to other islands; employment of local people, increased visitor numbers and a lengthened season help to sustain local business including transport services, restaurant and retail services across the archipelago.



View of Blockhouse Cottages from the Block House promontory

2 . Background and relevant Planning History

The only planning history that has been found for the cottages is permission was granted in 1992 for an extension (ref P3321).

3. Primary Legislation and Planning Policy

Planning Context

This proposal has been prepared within the context of a policy framework set out in both primary legislation and national and local planning policy. A summary of this framework is set out below.

Primary Legislation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990

The application site is situated within a Conservation Area and as such there is a requirement that the proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Tresco, along with the whole of the Isles of Scilly is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (AONB). In considering proposals located within AONBs, there is a consequential requirement for Local Authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations

There is a duty for the Local Authority to assess the impact of proposed development on any European Protected Species.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF)

This important policy document outlines the Government's over-arching planning policies and details how they expect these to be applied by Local Planning Authorities. The NPPF makes clear that there is a presumption in favour of development and confirms that the starting point for decision making is the statutory Development Plan. Local Planning policy is expected to conform with the requirements of the NPPF.

Isles of Scilly Local Plan – A 2020 Vision

Although the new Isles of Scilly Local Plan has reached an advanced stage in its preparation and consequently carries significant weight in the determination of planning applications, (see commentary below) until such time as this is formally adopted, the statutory Development Plan remains the Isles of Scilly Local Plan – A 2020 Vision. This plan was adopted in November 2005.

The adopted Local Plan provides a spatial strategy for the islands, reflecting the population, size and character of the community. The focus of the policies set out in the Local Plan is to meet the development needs of the islands, whilst at the same time protecting the special environment that provides the context for its economy, of which tourism plays a key role. Policy 1 relates to environmental protection and seeks to permit development proposal only where they respect and protect the recognised quality of the island's natural, archaeological, historic and built environment. More specifically, proposals should:

- (a) conserve or enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and protect the unspoilt character and good appearance of the heritage coast;
- (b) Preserve nationally important archaeological remains and their settings;
- (c) Preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and preserve the architectural or historic interest of all listed buildings, including their features and settings;
- (d) safeguard the integrity and nature conservation objectives of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), RAMSAR sites and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); and
- (e) protect a statutorily protected plant or animal species and the wildlife, geographical and geomorphological interest and features of designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and locally important biodiversity habitats, species and landscape features.

Policy 2 relates to Sustainable Development and seeks to permit development in situations where the development contributes to the sustainability of the islands' environment, economy or local community. Policy 2 (a) specifically requires development to ensure that it conserves or enhances the landscape, coastline, seascape and existing buildings of the islands through appropriate design including siting, layout, density, scale, external appearance (i.e. details and materials) and landscaping.

Policy 4 relates to supporting economic development proposals including where these are based on the existing economic base of tourism, agriculture and fishing, as well as the distinctiveness of the islands, particularly:

- (a) where such development contributes to the further diversification and essential modernisation of the islands' economy; or
- (b) 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.

The New Isles of Scilly Local Plan

The new Local Plan has reached a very advanced stage, with the expectation that it will be formally adopted in the near future. As such, the policies contained within it should be given significant weight in considering these proposals.

The new Local Plan sets out a spatial strategy for the next 15 years and provides a vision for the islands along with key objectives. The plan seeks to strike a balance between protecting and enhancing the high quality environment, whilst ensuring the islands communities and economy grow sustainably. Central to achieving this objective will be the creation of new employment opportunities and in particular, improving the quality of the tourism experience on the islands.

The new Local Plan makes clear that tourism will be a key driver for the islands' economy, recognising that whilst historically this grew rapidly, more recently the Islands' tourism economy has suffered a decline. Visitor numbers have dropped, (alongside a contraction in fishing and farming). The new Local Plan records that it must be responsive to the specific challenges it faces, (including the decline in tourism) and work proactively with applicants and investors to, 'secure developments that improve the economic and social conditions'. The Plan states that the focus will therefore be on finding solutions, 'to secure development that sustains the islands' future'.

The new Local Plan specifically acknowledges the part tourism will play in sustaining the economy of the islands. It states, 'there is a need to capitalise on and strengthen the quality and value of tourism, given it will continue to dominate the islands' economy over the plan period'. It goes on to say, 'creating a successful economy will require businesses to develop new opportunities, become more productive, and continually adapt to new challenges'.

The recognition within the new Local Plan that tourism is a key player in the islands' economy and that there is a requirement to strengthen and adapt this in the future, provides an important policy context for the consideration of these proposals. Whilst there are no specific employment developments identified in the new Local Plan, the policy framework generally encourages proposals that will help strengthen and diversify the islands' economy.

The Local Plan acknowledges the fact that tourism is likely to remain the largest part of the economy over the plan period. For this reason, the Plan states that it is important this sector is supported in, 'improving the quality of its offer, and that it responds to the expectations of its visitors'. The Plan goes on to state, 'A key challenge is to maximise the quality of its product and provide an offer that appeals to a range of visitors, including opening up to, or creating, new tourism markets and niches'. These proposals respond directly to this challenge.

Policy WCI – General Employment Policy makes clear that development proposals that strengthen, enhance and diversify the islands' economy will be supported where they are appropriately designed, scaled and located, in accordance with other policies in the Local Plan.

Policy WC5 - Visitor Economy and Tourism Developments sets out proposals for new or upgraded tourism development. Such proposals will be permitted where they, inter alia:

- (a) make a positive contribution to the provision of high quality sustainable tourism on the islands;
- (b) are located in sustainable and accessible locations; and
- (c) are appropriate to the site and its surroundings in terms of activity, scale and design; and
- (d) do not result in an unacceptable impact on the environment or residential amenities in accordance with other relevant policies in the Local Plan.

Policy WC5 also records that tourism developments will be particularly encouraged where it is demonstrated that, inter alia, they extend the tourism season and increase productivity and wages in tourism.

The policies within the new Local Plan also provide a range of policies designed to protect the landscape character (Policy OE1) as well as the natural (Policy OE2) and historic environment (Policy OE3).

The new Local Plan records that as a small island-based community, there is a need for Scilly to retain a balanced workforce. The plan notes that staff accommodation needs cannot be met outside the islands, due to the expense and logistics of commuting to and from the mainland. Policy LC4 recognises that additional staff accommodation may be required for businesses or organisations.

These proposals will result in the need to relocate one unit of staff accommodation from the existing building. This unit will be replaced as part of the Tresco Estate Partnership's application for a new suite of staff accommodation.

4. Context and Existing Buildings

The application site covers an area of approximately 1/4ha and is located on the east coast of the island, at the southern end of Old Grimsby Bay. The Blockhouse Cottages are located approximately 80m to the south west of the Old Block House.

Blockhouse Cottages are a row of unlisted, mid-19th century cottages. The existing cottages are not tied in their use, but their current condition and marginal standard of habitability has meant that they have typically been used as last choice accommodation for seasonal island workers.

The cottages are characterised by their traditional linear form with two gable ends, projecting service extensions and a single storey lean-to at each end. The slate roof line is punctuated with five regular chimney stacks and the elevations have been covered in modern pebble dash render.

The cottages were built with thick granite walls, with small cellular rooms and minimal windows to create compact 'no frills' living spaces for islanders, while offering protection against the harsh coastal conditions.

A further appraisal of Blockhouse Cottages' significance, contribution to the conservation area and wider landscape setting is included in the Heritage, Setting and Visual impact assessment that accompanies this application.

Blockhouse Cottages are now in a poor state of repair.

The solid wall construction and lack of ground floor damp proofing results in issues with rising and penetrating damp. The absence of insulation in the building envelope results in cold external walls that gather condensation and retain moisture.

In response to ongoing damp issues, the granite elevations of the cottages have previously been rendered in a cementitious pebble dash, which has considerably detracted from their appearance. This in turn has deteriorated causing further issues with damp and moisture retention trapped behind the render within the external walls.

The existing under sized timber joists have a high deflection, offer no acoustic separation, and would have a poor performance in a fire. The buildings are not efficient to heat, with limited opportunities to retrofit insulation into the existing walls. The rooms rely heavily on artificial lighting because of the lack of natural light entering the building through the small windows, which also limit views from the buildings.

The myriad of further issues are detailed within a condition survey carried out by Currie and Brown dated 10th September. This report has been submitted as part of the accompanying application documentation.



Existing Blockhouse Cottages

Beyond the issues with the building fabric, the accommodation is under sized and poorly planned. The existing layout is inconvenient and impractical for all occupants, under sized rooms limit the number of occupants and visitors.

The stairs are steeper than current building regulations allow, and bathrooms are at ground floor level only (accessed through the living spaces). Such a layout precludes the use of these units by disabled or elderly residents.

The substandard level of accommodation is reflected in the fact that there is currently only one hardy long term tenant and one short term occupant. The remaining two units are currently unoccupied. The existing cottages are considered to only be fit for occupation in the summer and not the winter. Due to the poor condition and layout, they are not fit for children or older occupants at any time.

An assessment by Currie and Brown identifies that to renovate the existing spaces and make them habitable to current standards is estimated at a cost of approx £1mil. Such an outlay would never be financially viable in terms of the return that could be generated by refurbishing the existing cottages. Furthermore this programme of works would not solve the fundamental issues of cellular layout, headroom etc.

The consequence of the above is that the cottages are likely fall into further disrepair unless an alternative approach can be found.

The proposals herewith instead seek to replace the existing Blockhouse Cottages row.

Within this application the replacement of the existing cottages, in place of renovation, has been considered in terms of access, sustainability, heritage, commercial viability and the quality of accommodation.



5. Design, Scale, Massing and Materials

The original row of cottages would be demolished and replaced with a new 5 bedroom house that would maintain the vernacular character and form of the original row.

Replacing the original building would enable the provision of a more energy efficient and sustainable building, that meets the goals stated in the local plan to “*maximise the quality of its tourism offering and provide an offer that appeals to a range of visitors, including creating new tourism markets and niches*”

The form, proportions and orientation of the existing cottages would largely be recreated, and therefore maintain the buildings appearance in, and its relationship to, the surrounding landscape.

The proposed building would be site on the footprint of the existing cottage row, no closer to the Block House scheduled ancient monument than existing.

Massing & Form

The proposed building takes its form directly from the existing row of cottages, as it is recognised that this is characteristic of the landscape setting and that the existing row makes a modest contribution to the setting of the Old Block House and surrounding context.

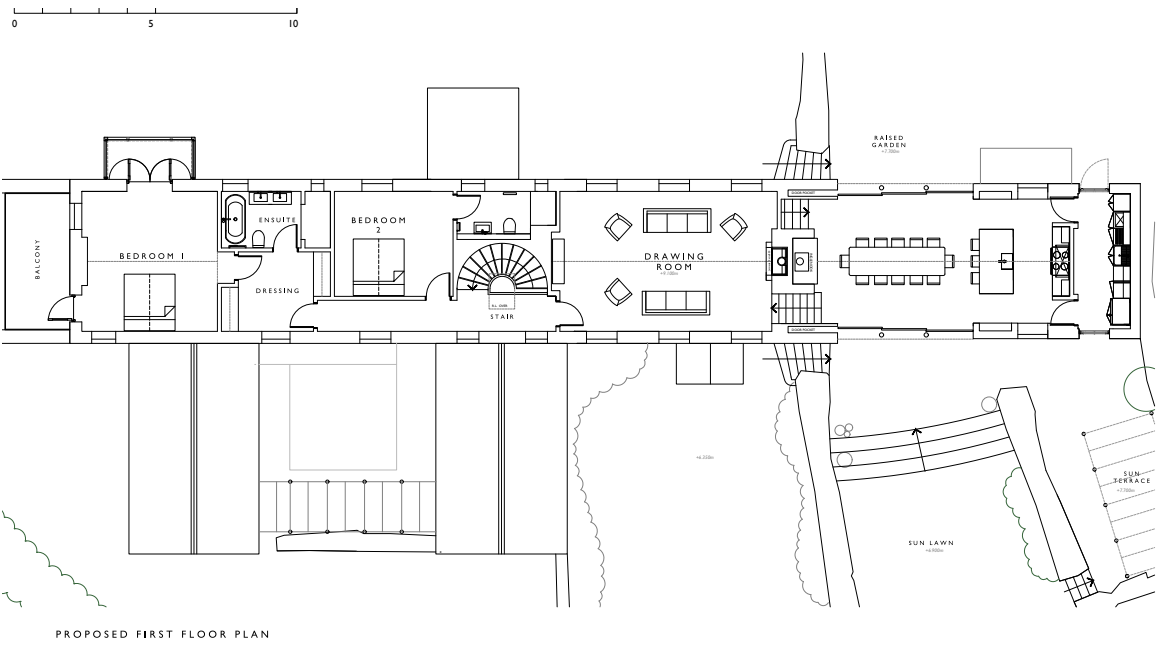
Externally, the mass and characteristics of the existing cottages would be maintained. The main body of the proposed dwelling is a long, linear masonry building, with a shallow dual-pitched slate roof featuring 5 regularly spaced and sized chimney stacks with tapering granite caps.

From this would project several perpendicular single storey extensions, the roof forms of which faithfully recreate the form of the existing service extensions. To the south these projections enclose a sheltered courtyard garden.

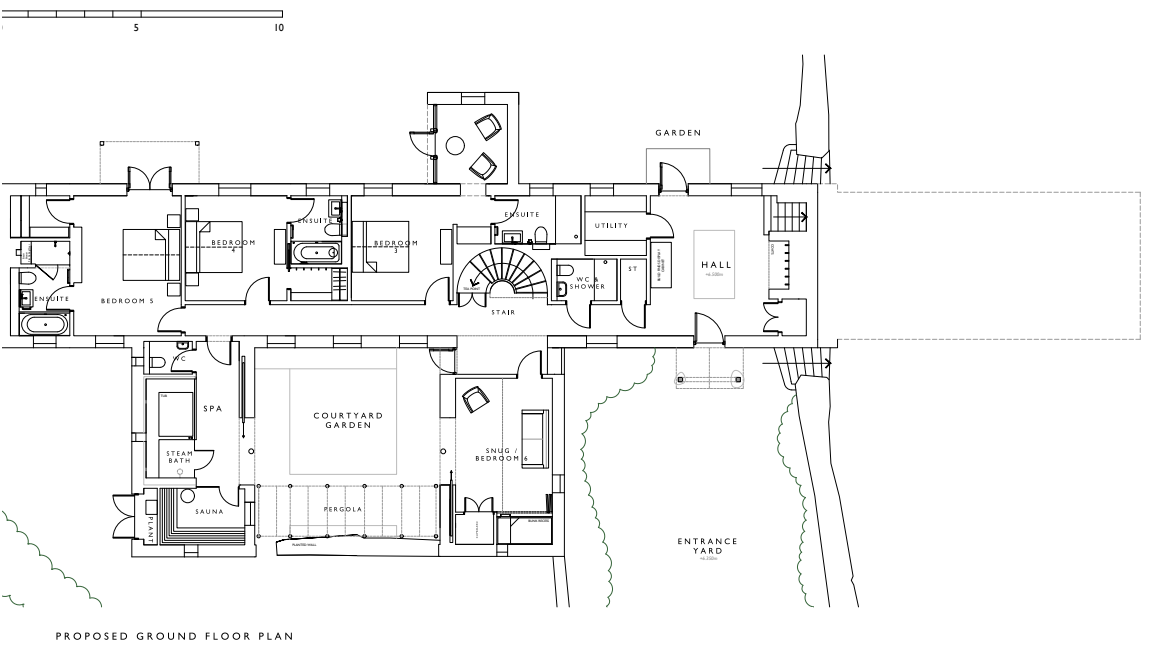
The former lean-tos and conservatory on the eastern end of the dwelling would be replaced with a single storey kitchen wing on the half level. This would be the element which deviates most greatly in form from the original cottage row. However, it would be subservient in height, character and materials, and well shielded by existing boundary planting. Large openings and timber cladding would give this building element the architectural characteristics of a service / outbuilding.

A separate annexe building, in the form of a traditional, low slung, Scilly’s gig shed, located to the west of the site would provide staff accommodation.

A new studio space would be created by extending the existing outbuildings to the south



Proposed First Floor Plan



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

of the cottage row, adjacent to a small outbuilding to accommodate plant, cycle storage and housekeeping.

The building would be entered from the south east elevation, and the entrance yard would be sheltered by the buildings, existing vegetation and falling contours. This provides privacy upon entrance and ensures that paraphernalia such as golf buggies and bicycles are not prominent in distant views.

Scale

The scale of the proposed building would be closely aligned to the scale of the existing cottages, in terms of its relationship with the surrounding landscape. The scale of the two storey element would be slightly reduced in length, with the subtracted length added to the single storey kitchen wing at half level.

The ridge height of the main body of the proposed building would be raised by less than 1m over the existing cottages. This small height increase would allow the ground floor level to be raised, to mitigate risk of flooding and the creation of an insulated ground floor. It would also allow for the provision of deeper floor and roof structures with upgraded insulation to be installed, and a modest improvement to internal floor to ceiling heights.

Materials

The building takes its material palette from the existing vernacular on the islands, which has continued to evolve and been developed over recent decades into a Tresco style. This style picks up on local materials and on traditional details, and uses them to make high quality and contemporary spaces that are tailored for the tourist market.

The proposed building would continue this pattern of development, with Tresco Estate making significant investment into high quality materials. Local granite masonry salvaged from the demolition of the existing cottages would be re-used to face the majority of the replacement building (a significant improvement over the current pebble dash).

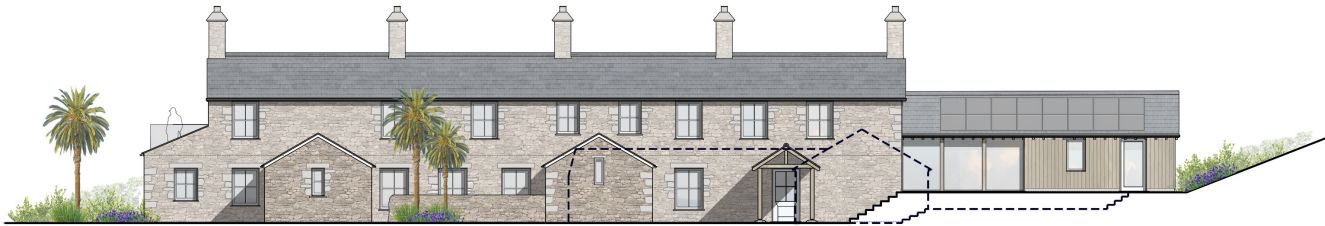
Other proposed materials would reflect the surroundings and existing buildings; they include a palette of granite, cornish hedging, natural slate roofing, untreated timber boarding and painted timber windows to provide continuity of character.



NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

Proposed Elevations as labelled

6. Impact upon the character of the Conservation Area, the AONB and the historic Environment

The accompanying Heritage, Setting and Visual Impact Assessment provides an overview of the heritage context of the site, an assessment of significance and a heritage impact assessment of the proposals, and analyses key views in which the site is present. These have been assessed in accordance to the relevant local and national policy.

The design of the building has taken into account the characteristics and historic context of the area, including the relationship of the site to the Old Blockhouse, the landscape character of the setting and key views in the conservation area in which the building features. The key views assessment demonstrates that the form, scale, massing and character of the proposed building responds directly to the buildings that it would replace, preserving the vernacular character of the building in the immediate setting. The proposed materials reflect the traditional and vernacular style present across the island. The proposed annexe and studio would be additional buildings on the site but their visual impact has been reduced through their proposed form and materials.

The assessment concludes that in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the special architectural and historic interest of the Old Blockhouse, and the setting of the listed building and conservation area, would be preserved.

In accordance with the terminology of the National Planning Policy Framework, it is considered that the proposed work would not cause any harm to the significance of the Old Blockhouse and the setting of the listed building and conservation area. The proposed building would maintain the modest contribution that the cottages make to the setting, and would arguably modestly enhance the setting as the proposed building would have traditional granite elevations in place of the extant modern pebble dash render. Any perceived harm caused by the visual impact of the proposed annexe and studio buildings is arguably mitigated by their proposed form and materials responding to the traditional buildings and vernacular on the island, and the improved accommodation and opportunities that the buildings would provide to improve the visitor experience to the island. The proposals are therefore considered to be the type of sustainable development for which the NPPF establishes a strong presumption and it would align with relevant national and local policy.

As such, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in heritage terms.



Existing view towards the Old Blockhouse



Proposed view towards the Old Blockhouse

7. Sustainability Assessment

7.1 Context

The underlying principle behind the scheme is economic, social and environmental sustainability. Improvements are made through clean energy, with reductions in emissions, and reduced reliance on carbon fuels, in line with Council policy.

7.2 Social

The proposal would introduce an innovative type of accommodation to the islands, providing for expert led trips for groups in high quality short let accommodation. These would sometimes involve island people as leaders, and would import experts to provide specialist knowledge, widening the cultural experience of the island, and drawing in new groups of visitors, adding to the traditional clientele. This would deliver key aspects of the Island Partnership's Destination Management Plan, which has an emphasis on cultural tourism and wellness, both of which would be addressed through these facilities.

The proposed development would allow the Estate to build on, and further develop its current very successful specialist retreats. The proposed scheme would allow the Estate to develop new offers, with an emphasis on fitness and health, and Scilly's unique cultural and heritage assets.

7.3 Economic

There is currently a shortage of high capacity, high quality rental properties that cater for multiple or large families, or large groups. Changing tourism patterns have created a demand for accommodation that caters for families and larger groups. The Estate would benefit from a diversification of the existing portfolio, creating more choice for prospective visitors, which would allow flexibility of use by multiple family groups or leader led retreats, with the studio supporting this arrangement for specialist activities.

Such offerings are beneficial as they contribute to extending the season into the shoulder months. The proposals would support the island economy, as would the delivery of the Destination Management Plan aspirations in relation to culture and wellness. It would create opportunities for locals to lead, and for service groups based on Tresco.

Inevitably, investment on Tresco has an indirect economic benefit to other islands, with transport services, employment of local people, restaurant and retail services across the islands benefiting.

7.4 Environmental

The proposals would reuse an existing plot and employ reclaimed materials. The detailed design would be developed to minimise energy use and the building's carbon footprint, both in the construction works and in ongoing use. The following energy strategy outlines this approach in detail.

An Ecology report accompanies this application and its recommendations will be adopted into the works. Landscape proposals take the opportunity to considerably enhance the ecological value of the site with additional and more diverse planting. This is being undertaken by the curator of the Tresco Abbey Gardens, which has an international reputation.

8. Energy Strategy

Embodied Energy In Construction

A considerable proportion of a building's carbon footprint is attributable to the manufacturing and transportation of building materials. To minimise this, the building's exterior would be clad in long lasting materials, and installed with robust detailing, capable of withstanding the marine environment. Improved life span ensures a better return on the energy expended in construction.

Indigenous natural materials would be used wherever possible. These would include reclaimed granite and some local timber. The specification would be developed with reference to the BRE Green Guide to Specification to evaluate the environmental credentials of the materials procured from further afield.

A Site Waste Management Plan detailing handling and recycling of building materials is included in the accompanying documentation. Recycling of materials once the building is in use would be dealt with by the Estate's central arrangements, where re-use and composting of waste products is managed across the island.

Heat Loss and Energy use

The proposals take a 'fabric first' approach to energy reduction, seeking to minimise consumption from the outset through the use of passive design principles. These include optimising orientation and massing, as well as ensuring the use of high-performance building fabric.

The east-west orientation of the building and increased glazing on the south side maximises solar gain, reducing the heatload requirements. Large glazed screens are protected by overhanging eaves, this arrangement allows passive thermal gain in the winter when the sun is low in the morning and throughout the day, thereby providing additional warmth for the building interior and reducing the overall heat load of the house. Conversely, less of the high summer high sun penetrates the building, avoiding the risk of overheating.

The increased levels of glazing for the living areas will reduce the need for artificial light. The arrangement of opening windows on both sides of the dwelling allows natural cross ventilation which in the summer will help maintain even, comfortable temperatures.

The proposed building would have a thermal performance that is far superior to the existing building that would be replaced. This would reduce the energy required to heat the property. Double glazed windows would improve control over air tightness and improve thermal performance.

The new building would have insulation that is far superior to the existing building that would be replaced. The timber framed fabric of the building is designed to be heavily insulated, extremely airtight and with minimal thermal bridging. Off-site manufacturing ensures precision construction, with improved air tightness and thermal performance beyond building regulations standards.

U-value performance of typical building fabric elements would be as follows:

Element	Existing	B Reg.s Min.	Proposed
Walls	1.90 W/m2K	0.30 W/m2K	0.16W/m2K
Roof	1.05 W/m2K	0.20 W/m2K	0.18W/m2K
Floor	1.10 W/m2K	0.25 W/m2K	0.20W/m2K

These improvements would dramatically reduce the energy required to heat the property.

The use of new double glazed windows would: improve air tightness; improve thermal performance; increase the amount of natural light entering the property; and reduce the energy demand from space heating and artificial lighting as a consequence

Renewable Energy Sources

Two 4 kW Solar PV arrays would be installed as part of the development. One onto the roof of the annexe and one onto the south facing kitchen wing. 8 kW capacity battery storage would be connected to this array, storing excess power generated for use at peak times when output from the solar array is low. Any excess power generated beyond the battery capacity would be exported to the local grid. The energy and carbon associated with the manufacture and installation of the PV panels would be covered by 3 years of generation in this location.

The buildings would be heated using air-source heat pumps, which are typically 3 times more efficient than traditional direct electric heating methods. This approach is particularly effective on Tresco, where the temperate climate ensures operating efficiency is maintained through the year. These would be powered by locally generated electricity from the PV array; effectively creating a zero carbon heating system.

An air source heat pump will supply hot water to the dwelling. This is a system that would typically be >350% efficient (in comparison to an electric immersion or convector heater) and is particularly effective in the mild Tresco climate. An under floor heating system will complement this approach, distributing lower temperature, more efficiently generated, heat over a large area.

The house has a log burner, which will be used to supplement the dwelling’s heat load. The stove will be fuelled using timber from regenerating sources on the island.

Lighting can add significantly to the electrical loads. All internal and external lighting will use low energy lamps and bulbs. External lighting will also be controlled by appropriate timing and daylight sensor devices to minimise energy consumption.

Transport

Transport on Tresco is by foot or bicycle and there are no private cars. Vehicles employed to distribute goods around the island are typically electric golf carts.

Water and Sewage

The island is self-sufficient in harvesting and distributing potable water, and in collecting and treating sewage effluent. Large-scale centralised management of these services is considerably more efficient and effective than micro-measures associated with individual dwellings. There is sufficient capacity for the proposed dwelling to be added to the existing systems.

The proposed dwelling has been designed to minimise water usage. Low water use appliances would be specified where possible, including dual-flush toilets and aerating nozzles throughout.

A gravity fed rainwater harvesting tank, located under the proposed terrace, would store rainwater for use in watering the gardens.

Excess surface water will be discharged into soakaways.

9. Impact on the Natural Environment

Landscape

Tresco estate has an excellent track record when it comes to the management of the gardens and wider landscapes. The Abbey Gardens in particular are an internationally renowned landscape garden.

The existing landscape surrounding the proposed building is domestic garden. They are relatively private and sheltered being enclosed by the dwelling, topography and dunes.

These gardens would be cleared of the gathering assorted clutter and domestic paraphernalia thereby improving the setting of, and views from, the Block House scheduled ancient monument.

The layout and planting of the external spaces would reflect the traditional pattern of hedges enclosing sheltered spaces. The gardens to the north west of the building would retain their more open arrangement as they continue to the edge of the dunes.

Existing cornish hedges and planting would be retained or reused where possible. This includes the south east corner of the site where terracing would be maintained to create an entrance yard, with a lawn and sitting area above.



Flood Risk Map

10. Flood Risk

The proposed site is identified on the environment agency maps as being located in Flood Zone 1.

Areas deemed to be in flood zone 1 have been shown to be at less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year; (i.e. a 1:1000 year chance). As such the development should not face any restrictions as a result of flood risk.

The local plan requires a min ground floor level of +5.000m for any new development.

The existing cottages have a ground floor level of +6.000m.

The plot is in a semi-exposed part of the coastline that can be subject to more violent seas than the more developed northern end of Old Grimsby Bay. Given these circumstances, and the global trend for rising sea levels, the proposals would increase the ground floor level by a 0.5m to +6.500m in order to further mitigate any risk of flooding.

11. Access

Outside

The existing tracks will be used to access the plot.

The absence of cars on Tresco creates a safe, peaceful and refreshing environment and reduces emissions. For less mobile guests, golf buggies or mobility scooters can be hired, but most visitors hire bicycles or walk.

The new yard would provide space for a golf cart to turn and park, and to unload adjacent to entrance door. An electric vehicle charging point would be provided.

The new studio outbuilding would provide a covered space to store bicycles.

Tresco's emergency services would have sufficient existing capacity to deal with the modest increase in scale of this property. The new yard would provide better access for attending vehicles.

Inside

The building has been designed to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations, with downstairs bedrooms and level access where possible. This will be a significant improvement over the existing arrangement.

Provision of ground floor bedrooms and living spaces ensure that the dwelling can be occupied by all.



12. Conclusion

In line with Local Plan policy, the Tresco Estate Partnership is seeking to, *'maximise the quality of its tourism offering and provide an offer that appeals to a range of visitors, including creating new tourism markets and niches'*

The proposed scheme would deliver this aspiration, providing more diverse and improved accommodation.

The proposed scheme seeks to replace the existing cottages, which currently provide a poor standard of accommodation, and are only in partial occupation as a result. The existing accommodation is deteriorating, it has very poor energy performance, and its layout is inconvenient and impractical for occupants.

A concurrent application replaces and supplements staff accommodation.

The proposed accommodation would provide a much improved building in terms of the quality of accommodation and the facilities available, much improved energy efficiency and accessibility in the building, and the potential to appeal to a greater diversity of user, including large families, a number of families, and large groups.

The form, scale, massing and character of the proposed building responds directly to the building that it would replace, preserving the vernacular character of the building in the immediate setting. The proposed materials reflect the traditional and vernacular style across the island.

The Heritage, Setting and Visual Impact Assessment analyses the relationship of the site to the Old Blockhouse, and the landscape character of the setting and key views in the conservation area in which the building features. Any impact on the landscape and nearby ancient monument will be the same as the existing building. The design of the building has taken into account the characteristics and historic context of the area.

The proposed works would continue Tresco Estate's sensitive and well balanced management of the unique island setting. This recognises the need to preserve the natural and historic landscape as key to attracting and retaining visitors to the island. This is coupled with a focus on maintaining the quality of the tourist offering in order to ensure a robust and sustainable business model. The flexibility and diversification that the proposals would provide further strengthens this model.

Tresco's success is integral to the economic prosperity of the island group as whole, its contribution sustains many other local services including transport, employment, restaurant and retail across the archipelago .

Appendix I - Schedule of Areas

393I Blockhouse Cottages

Schedule of Areas

Existing		Proposed		Increase	
	GIA (m ²)		GIA (m ²)		
Ground Floor	207.21	Ground Floor	195.6		
First Floor	124.52	First Floor	177.6		
Total	331.73	Total	373.2	12.5%	
Additional External Stores	20.4	Annexe	31.4		
Greenhouse	6.2	Studio	44.8		
Existing Plant etc building	20	Cycles, plant, housekeeping	20		
Total	378.33	Total	469.4	24.1%	