

Council of the Isles of Scilly Planning Application

Ref: P/21/041/FUL

Consultation Response

Date: 6th June 2022
Ref: P/21/041/FUL
Site: Land at Porthcressa, Buzza Road, St Mary's
Proposal: Construction of two new dwellings.

You are being consulted on this application as you may wish to make comments before a decision is made. Should you wish to make any comments on this application, please complete the response form below and return to planning@scilly.gov.uk by 28th June 2021 or by post to the Planning Department, Town Hall, The Parade, Hugh Town, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly TR21 0LW.

Link to application: <https://www.scilly.gov.uk/planning-application/planning-application-p21041ful>

I look forward to receiving your comments in due course. If I have not heard back from you by the 20th June 2022 then I will assume you have no comments to make.

Consultee Name: Cornwall Archaeological Unit

[Comments here](#)

Thank you for reconsulting us on this application. We note the submission of a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) (Cornwall Archaeological Unit 2022R020) following on from our initial advice in June 2021.

The application site lies within the Buzza Hill Archaeological Constraint Area and in close proximity to two designated heritage assets: a Grade II Listed Building on Porthcressa Terrace (NHLE 1141181) and the Scheduled cairn/entrance grave on Buzza Hill (NHLE 1010174) but as the HIA demonstrates the application will have a negligible effect on the significance of these designated heritage assets.

The submitted HIA notes that the application site contains the site of two former buildings; the earliest, certainly mid-19th century in date (but perhaps earlier) was a single storey building within a sub-oval enclosure and in the southern part of the application site, a later 19th century building of unknown use, perhaps a building associated with a maritime activity. The c1880 and c1907 Ordnance Survey (OS) maps show a scatter of small square structures, perhaps outbuildings or stores, next to each building.

Analysis of the 1933 aerial photograph submitted by R Sandford suggests that both buildings were still roofed then.

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As the HIA demonstrates, the former single storey building survives as low rubble walls standing in the region of 1m high (see figs 21 and 23) but as high as 1.5m at the northern end (see fig 22). Fieldwork did not identify any surviving fireplace or internal walls, and despite the obscuring vegetation, it seems unlikely that any significant internal standing remains survive due to the structure having been largely demolished. However, the HIA notes that there is the potential for archaeology in the form of buried floors and evidence for building phases.

The HIA concludes that the ruins are potentially a single-storey cottage – the dwelling type typical of the Isles of Scilly in the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries. There are few very examples of these cottages surviving as standing ruins, the best preserved being the large group on Samson (Scheduled Monument NHLE 1016509; MCO30863).

Eric Berry notes in the 2011 SHERF traditional buildings assessment, a scatter of extant cottages (most of which have been later adapted and extended, often with upper floors added) found across the islands and that in their original form, '[they have] similarity to other small buildings in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and elsewhere, [which] needs to be better understood....'

However, it appears from an undated James Gibson photographic postcard of a view to Buzza Hill (Lisa Walton, pers comm) that the single storey building was (at the time of the postcard) not a dwelling but a store of some kind (with a large door on the right hand side). Analysis of the postcard also suggests that the southern, larger building was a store of some kind, with both buildings showing no evidence for chimneys or windows. James Gibson died in 1920 so the postcard predates then and as it shows the large quarry located upslope from the buildings, which was first recorded on the c1907 OS map, it must have taken in either the late 19th century or first couple of decades of the 20th century.

The small enclosure attached to the single-storey building perhaps suggests it once housed animals or was store of some kind, but it is still possible that the building evolved from a single-storey cottage.

We therefore consider that the application site has potential to provide evidence for the history of the vernacular building tradition on the Isles of Scilly, and in relation to the history and development of Porthcressa (and Hugh Town) in the late 19th century.

If the present proposal is accepted, the development presents an opportunity for the full analytical measured survey of the single storey building (and its immediate surroundings) following the careful removal of vegetation, and a targeted archaeological excavation of the interior and walls (to investigate if it developed from a single-storey cottage) with a watching brief on the southern part of the site to better understand the history and use of the later building. The watching brief should also record the sections of the enclosing wall breached to provide access to the development site.

We recommend, if consent is given to the present proposal, a single archaeological recording condition of sections A-D inclusive (please do not split into separate Conditions or treat separately), which includes words recommended by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO), as follows:

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A) No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological recording work including a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions, and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation

B) No development shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A).

C) The dwellings shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

D) The archaeological recording condition will normally only be discharged when all elements of the WSI including on site works, analysis, report, publication (where applicable) and archive work has been completed.

A pre-commencement condition is necessary in this instance due to the need to ensure that a programme and methodology of site investigation and recording of archaeological features is undertaken before physical works commence on site. This is in accordance with the provisions of NPPF (2021) Chapter 16, paragraph 205 and the Isles of Scilly Local Plan policy OE7.

Name: Peter Dudley

Date: 09/06/2022