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By Lisa Walton at 1:10 pm, Feb 14, 2022

Appletree
2 Matthews Field
Church Road
St Mary's
Isles of Scilly
TR21 0NA

14th February 2022

Dear Lisa

We are writing further to your letter dated 11th February 2022 and our subsequent email discussions.

We have been operating a B&B on Scilly since 2003 - continuously for 19 years. The Council has used these services throughout most of those years and did advertise the B&B on its tourism website. Our B&B business is therefore well established. In 2017 we purchased the residential property, called Appletree, which had also been used as a B&B during its history. We applied and were granted planning permission to extend the rear of Appletree to add en-suites to the first floor guest bedrooms and to enable guest sitting areas to relax in.

The planning department were made fully aware of our intentions to use the property to continue our already established B&B.

In 2021 we continued our B&B at Appletree with many returning guests, however, one problem was identified on the islands: the lack of places to eat. It was clear that we needed to diversify our B&B in a very small way in order to suit current customer needs. Therefore, we added basic temporary cooking facilities for the rest of the 2021 season and this winter. We then made an email request to make a planning application to the Council to add the temporary cooking facilities permanently to our guest rooms.

The Planning Department response was that we could one of only two options.

No 1. To turn our residence into 3 separate self contained units or
No 2. To turn our property into 3 separate dwellings for S106 local needs.

An online planning application was completed stating the description as follows:

'Install 2 kitchenettes into our 2 x B&B rooms and build a porch'.

Then we received an email from the planning dept that recommended our planning application description be changed to the following wording:

"Change of use of one single (C3) dwelling to 3 units, including one ground floor flat (owners accommodation) and two (ancillary) self-contained flats for short let holiday accommodation, including new entrance porch to rear."

We felt we had no choice but to agree to the recommended alteration to our original description.

To make it perfectly clear, at no point did we want, or request, to sub-divide our home into 3 self contained flats. We merely wanted to diversify what we were offering our guests by gaining proper permission for what we were already doing on a temporary basis. Thus the house would primarily remain as a residential 3 bedroom property rather than be sub divided.

Sub division is not our choice but seems the only current avenue available for our business to take. It feels there is no provision made for us to simply diversify our business in the small way needed in order to suit my customers needs. To be clear all we are requesting is for permission to add cooking facilities and a small porch.

We are happy to meet any Fire or any other regulations. We do not feel the Council has any provision in its Local Plan for us to make the small additions, as set out above.

We will continue with our planning application and hope that you and Councillors can see a more simple way forward for us other than refusal.

Reference the 'Housing Crisis' this is not an option for us as we have already signed two S106's and we cannot afford the further financial shortfall of losing our main household income.

I would request that you consider the above points raised when you make your recommendation to the Council.

Kind Regards

Todd and Carmen Stevens