

Design & Access Statement

Overview

The site is a rarely used section of a private garden. In the foreground of striking granite boulders and close to the sea, it is a picturesque spot suitable for modest development. Creating a sauna space in this site would have the effect of opening up the space to small numbers of people at a time, making the most of the garden and the stunning views as a peaceful setting to enable and enhance health and wellbeing activities.

Context of the site and its surroundings

The garden for the proposed sauna is currently accessed via Mincarlo & The Biggal front pathway and garden. Whilst the sauna would only involve movements of small numbers of people, it would be preferable for a separate, discreet access of a new set of steps (timber, and granite where possible) to be built from the promenade below, at the same time taking the opportunity to landscape the slope between the garden and the prom. The prom is mostly used for people at leisure dog-walking or taking time to relax on a bench, also for access to the lifeboat station. The studio design need not impose on these activities, in addition it would be ensured that the steps access would not cause a hazard for lifeboat crew on a shout or training. Timber steps would comply with building regs.

The sauna would sit in a garden framed throughout the seasons with granite rock, vibrant agapanthus, crassula and aeonium blooms, silver-grey pittosporum hedges and the ever-changing colours of the sea.



The current landscape within the site is grass surrounded by escallonia & pittosporum hedging. Bedrock and background landscape is granite. There is a picturesque old dry-stone wall above the site, which would be retained along with any established plants. There are no groundworks required for this project.

We are particularly happy that the sauna would have a very low environmental impact, and supports Scilly as a dark skies destination.

Social context

The proposed sauna would be available to locals and visitors throughout the year. Sauna can be a private, personal area of relaxation and solitude, or a relaxing environment for socialising with family, friends or soon-to-be friends, as the sauna environment is conducive to open, intimate and quiet conversation.

There are many health benefits to sauna, which can be a wonderful addition to an overall health and wellness plan. Sauna is great for relieving stress, improving cardiovascular health, relaxing muscles, soothing aches/pains in both muscles and joints; overall a pampering retreat where you can relax and restore body and mind.



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Economic context

The sauna project would support the local economy by providing an opportunity for locals, regular visitors and more active sporting visitors coming for holidays of e.g. swimming/running to indulge in a new health & wellbeing activity on the island. It will also help grow our business, Adventure Scilly, with which we already offer yoga, guided sea swimming and other mindful, immersive activities around the islands.

Continuing to market Scilly to tourists as a destination for health, activity and wellbeing in a stunning natural environment continues to set good economic viability for this project.

Planning policy context - The Spatial Planning Vision

78. Regarding the Local Plan we feel this project contributes towards “the achievement of sustainable development by enabling better paid jobs whilst protecting and enhancing the islands’ exceptional environment.”

79. This projects fits very well with **The Vision In 2030:** The Isles of Scilly is a highly desirable place where people are able to live well, work productively, and move freely between islands and the mainland; they can also benefit from excellent education, leisure, health and social care facilities, within a world- class environment in harmony with nature. The distinctiveness and exceptional environment, with the influence of the sea, continue to provide a strong sense of community, identity and belonging; these remain vital assets for the islands’ economy and well-being.

85. Within the Council’s Strategic Aims & Objectives, we feel that this project ensures that the distinctive landscape, seascape and nature assets of the site are protected, valued and enhanced with the design of the sauna and spaces around it.

The sauna would provide a sustainable opportunity to bring health and wellbeing activities to the local and visitor communities in a resilient and self-sufficient way.

(4) will contribute to a more competitive, diverse and resilient economy based on our exceptional and inspirational environment (practicing sauna in a beautiful space within the natural landscape)... and maximise opportunities by building on its strengths (the islands’ raw beauty) and underpinned by effective infrastructure (the simple sauna design) and an appropriately available & skilled workforce (us).

(5) ...supporting a strong, vibrant & healthy island community with an improved quality of life for its residents - this applies to the improved quality of life the broader local and visitor community can gain through use of the sauna.

(7) The sauna notably minimises carbon emissions by being built with sustainable materials as well as being entirely off-grid & using a sustainable fuel provider.



Accessibility

Due to the topography of the site it would not be easily accessible by wheelchairs or people with restricted mobility. However we would love to be inclusive and would always be happy to address accessibility issues on an individual basis.