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PLANNING DEPARTMENT**Statement for Planning - Lunnon Farm Cottage: 11 AUG 2016****Background/Context:**

Matthew and Claire Rogers live in a small, tenanted, first-floor flat above 'Seasalt' in Hugh Town. This flat is subject to a Section 106 agreement.

Matthew is a co-tenant of Lunnon Farm and partner in the farm business and Claire is proprietor of St Mary's Riding Centre which is situated on the Farm. Both Claire and Matthew are local; they were both born on Scilly into Scillonian families, and were educated on the Islands and, post-16, on the Mainland. After Mainland-based work, they both returned to Scilly.

Lunnon is a long-established, active and commercial family farm which has been run by members of the family for at least seven generations. The core business is the growing and exporting of narcissi flowers and bulbs. (Approximately 2.5 million flowers and 20 tonnes of bulbs are exported annually). Farm diversification includes self-catering accommodation and tree surgery services.

Claire learnt to ride in Scilly, and fulfilled her ambition by establishing St. Mary's Riding Centre, built in 2004. It is now a successful and well-respected BHS-approved centre. Claire provides year-round horse riding for both locals and visitors. With her twenty horses Claire gives opportunities for local young people to gain a wealth of experience, not only in horse riding but in responsibility, leadership and teamwork, apart from the practical skills necessary for equine care.

The Farm and the Riding Centre contribute to the Islands in various ways, to the social and environmental fabric of the Islands, and to the Islands' economy, providing seasonal and part-time employment for up to twenty, mainly local, people.

Claire and Matthew have one child - a boy of 18 months - and another child is due in September 2016. As noted above, their current home is a small rented flat above the 'Seasalt' shop. It is becoming increasingly inappropriate for them. The lack of internal and external space is now very problematic. There is no garden and the limited space indoors means that there is very little living or play area inside the flat, and almost no safe play area outside. The only access, an external wooden staircase, is proving awkward and difficult to negotiate, especially with a family and for small children.

Proposal:

Lunnon Farm Cottage, situated near the main farmhouse and in the Lunnon Farm tenancy, is currently used for holiday accommodation. It is an old, semi-detached, two bedroom cottage with a lean-to kitchen at the rear on the ground floor. Also at the rear on the

ground floor is the only bathroom (including WC), a small, single-block lean-to extension built in the 1960s.

Although the cottage is maintained each year it is becoming progressively damp and needs attention while at the same time upgrading and modernisation is increasingly necessary.

It is therefore proposed that the cottage be made into a home suitable for the twenty first century by upgrading the interior and the limited facilities, and also by constructing an extension at the rear of the cottage. This would enlarge the kitchen and make space for a washing machine, and create a sitting room, a bedroom with ensuite, a family bathroom and a downstairs toilet. The extension to the cottage is the subject of this planning application.

It should be noted that this plan removes an important income stream from the farm.

But:

Benefits:

Matthew, Claire and their young family would have a much less difficult and much more appropriate home.

Matthew and Claire would be in close proximity to their work, removing the current necessity of many journeys to work from Hugh Town to Lunnon.

Not only is this move economically and practically very sensible, (Matthew to be at the heart of the farm and Claire to be near her horses and Riding Centre), but this will also help to decrease the traffic on the roads of St Mary's.

Importantly, it also releases a Section 106 dwelling for local residents.

Visual Impact and Design:

The Cottage is hidden from most views. Indeed, the chimneys are in many cases the most that people ever see of the building (see photographs). The Carn to the South and hedges and trees to the SW, E, NE and N all contribute to the very minimal sight of the Cottage from the A3110 and surrounding areas. Thus an addition would not constitute an obvious or large intrusion in the landscape.

Discussions of the proposal centred around internal and external design, appearance, visual impact, and the twin practical aspects of construction and finance.

Materials: It was decided that the addition should be timber-framed and timber-clad with vertical wooden planking. This design and material would form a contrast to the original cottage, echo Lunnon's nearby farm shed (see various maps submitted) and would be, in design and construction, similar to many farm sheds and also to many new-builds and current additions to buildings within Scilly, including those in the immediate area. This cladding is now part of the Islands' vernacular building style and thus it seemed visually, practically and financially appropriate. (A granite addition was considered but this suggestion was discarded because of practical difficulties and because of finance). All roofs would be of natural slate.

Any new rooflights and windows would be wood-framed and therefore in keeping with the new addition which itself would contrast with the existing cottage.

Solar panels would be used wherever possible without detracting from the overall attractive appearance of the cottage.

Position: Aligning the extension with the front of the Cottage, or setting it back slightly, were options which were considered. However the practical difficulties of digging foundations to the SE side of the Cottage became abundantly clear with granite bedrock at, or very close to, the ground surface in this area. Because of this, together with the added benefit of minimising any visual impact, an addition with a parallel pitch, mainly to the rear of the Cottage, is proposed. From the front (SW) of the existing cottage only about 5m of the extension would be seen, and this would be considerably set back.

Please note that it will be necessary to remove a short run of pittosporum hedge on the East side of the Cottage (see sketch map).

Design: To ensure that the addition does not dominate the existing cottage it is proposed that the two roof heights of the parallel pitches would be the same. It should be noted that it would be difficult to decrease the height of the new roof and still have sufficient vertical and horizontal living space on the first floor. The internal height to the eaves is 1.6m. Whilst this is a limiting factor, it reflects the interesting internal appearance and character of the existing cottage.

The roof of the kitchen would not be pitched but rather continue as a lean-to roof. This would further ameliorate any visual impact of the addition and also diminish any impact on our neighbours.

To gain enough roof height for the stairs and the link between the first floor of the original cottage and the first floor of the addition, a bridging roof (with roof lights) is proposed. This would also have the benefit of adding the interest of varying angles to the two roofs.

A lean-to porch is proposed in the front (Southern part) of the extension, both for practical reasons and also to break the geometry of the front elevation.

French windows are proposed for the lounge to allow as much light and air as possible and a 'vertical' look to the first floor windows of the extension would be attractive and in keeping with a timber-clad structure.

All windows and doors would be double glazed while the whole building would be highly insulated.

Sewerage and Waste Water:

The Cottage has a septic tank and soakaway situated in the back garden (on the N side of the Cottage). For this reason it is preferred to keep all drainage (kitchen, utilities, sinks WC's etc) to the rear (Northerly side) of the extension.

Footprint and size of the existing cottage and the addition/extension:

Please note that the thick walls of the cottage quite considerably reduce the internal measurements, and thus the living area, of the original cottage.

a) Ground Floor:

Existing building: The footprint of the existing cottage, excluding the redundant shed at the rear of the existing cottage (see plan), is approximately 58.06 m². However, this shed would be incorporated into the new building, thus giving a total footprint of 70.48 m².

Addition: The footprint of the proposed addition, excluding the porch is 58.03 m², and including the porch, measures 59.53m².

b) First Floor:

Existing building: Using external dimensions the area of the existing first floor (ie containing 2 bedrooms) is 38.72 m².

Addition: The proposed addition (to add a bedroom/en-suite plus a landing and family bathroom, and storage/cupboard space) is 55.66 m². However, as noted above, because of keeping the two roof heights (of the existing cottage and of the proposed addition) the same, the upstairs walls/ceiling will be angled and this therefore reduces the available head-height internal living space area.

Access:

Vehicular access is currently via a track shared with Carn Friars Cottage leading South from the two cottages to the main road (A3110), while pedestrian-only access is by a footpath between the Cottages and the Farm. It is proposed that there would be no alterations to this.

Boundaries and Garden:

It is planned to retain the boundaries (mixed shrubs including pittosporum, olearia) and garden and as they are and where possible and necessary, improve the garden area.