

Dean Ciaran

From: Planning (Isles of Scilly)
Subject: FW: P/18/090/FUL - Men-a-Vaur, Church Road

From: Robert Lambert <PROVIDED>
Sent: 04 January 2019 14:36
To: Planning (Isles of Scilly) <planning@scilly.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: P/18/090/FUL - Men-a-Vaur, Church Road

FAO: Lisa Walton, Senior Officer, Planning & Development Management

RE: Planning Reference: P/18/090/FUL - Men-a-Vaur, Church Road

I write to record our reservations and concerns over the above application to remove the garden of Men-a-Vaur and convert an existing wild and green space into a holiday apartment complex. We are very recent arrivals into Church Road but have a long association with the Isles of Scilly, one which we cherish. It has been noted in other comments that rampant in-filling of gardens, open spaces and allotments across Hugh Town has been undertaken to an excessive and undesirable extent. All green spaces, be they overgrown or tended have both cultural and ecological value, and the lovely historic walled garden at Men-a-Vaur is no exception. It may appear unloved at first glance, but in fact it is a great repository of bird and insect life, contains admired and harvested fruit trees and a remarkable New Zealand pohutukawa tree, with associated rich biodiversity. The gardens behind the properties on Church Road provide a wonderful wildlife corridor, as species commute up and down seeking refuge and food. The patchwork quilt of different green spaces across Rams Valley and beneath Buzza Tower create an outlook that adds amenity value and distinctiveness to this part of Hugh Town. Our rear view aspect from Rosevean House, the building adjoining Men-a-Vaur, will be much diminished by the loss of the green oasis behind. Looking down into it generates a sense of well-being and health for all residents in the wider valley area.

We are both aware of ongoing issues with sewerage and drainage run-off in the surrounding built up area, as we are with congestion with residents parking on Church Road and narrow uneven pedestrian pathways into Branksea Close that cannot tolerate large vehicular access. We are also aware that this property has exorcised the mind of planners on a number of occasions before, under previous ownership, when inappropriate development and summer staff conversion usage was proposed. We also recognise that the proposal to include disabled holiday facilities in the development is to be applauded, as inclusivity in the holiday experience is a goal for all destinations. On a personal level, Dr Lambert notes this from his own father's keen desire to re-visit Scilly, wheelchair-bound, after suffering major stroke in 2012. There is some provision for disabled holidaymakers elsewhere (for example, ground-floor suite with wet room in Atlantic Hotel), so existing provision is not a blank canvass at all.

Ultimately this proposal feels like garish over-development in a unique community-led area of Hugh Town; one which brings with it some obvious important inclusivity gains around the concept of access for all, but also brings a deep sense of loss.....be that visual, ecological, historical, or the far less tangible (but so very important) sense of 'integrity of place'. The British have a long history of rallying to defend that against development.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Rob Lambert & Lucy McRobert
3 Rosevean House, Church Road

4 January 2019

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