

**APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION OF BARN ON LAWRENCES BROW, ST MARTINS FOR
SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ACCOMMODATION**



MacCormac hay topper

Restored, In front of my Barn on Lawrence's Brow

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The barn was erected as per tag below, from the date of erection, 1937, By F E Stevens and sons, Fuchsia Cottage, Middletown, St Martins

Fred Stevens was a flower farmer, and largest employer of agricultural workers here on St Martins.

The land he leased from the Duchy extended from Lowertown quay, along the South side of St Martins, to Highertown Quay and up over the Island almost as far as The Daymark.

There are three shuttered concrete buildings here on St Martins that Fred and family erected in the late thirties. Enquiring locally about these concrete barns, anecdotally it is believed that the one partly demolished at Lowertown housed his horses, while the one recently used to house the old fire tender, and the one this application applies to, now leased by myself, were erected to accommodate his agricultural workers.

This is the subject of my application

Upon taking up residence of the barn on Lawrence's brow I found inside, the rusting remains of an old bedstead, two disintegrating art Deco style chairs and three Tilly Lamps and Denby Ink bottle,



pictured here, which I have kept to this day.



ACCESS TO SITE

There is good access to the site, both by foot, and vehicles.

The site is accessed on both East and west, by wide tracks that allow unhindered passage of vehicles. My neighbour Jonathan Smith, 75m to the West, who also grows Organic produce, passes past my site daily in his tractor to service his yurt occupants and his organic produce, in his fields.

The track on the East side of my land is used by many farmers of the Island to drag seaweed from the beach, to use as fertiliser, as I do currently, on a daily basis.

The Post office is approximately 400m up Elbow lane, and the Emergency Fire/Ambulance station is 200m to the North, with ease of access to my land.

James Morton uses these tracks, passing the school 100m away, weekly on his rounds collecting recycled household waste, which is a benefit for my disposal on a weekly basis of items which I do not compost, or feed to my animals.

I have leased the land outlined in blue for 26 years and currently grow organic vegetables and fruit, for sale on the Island and keep a flock of around 50 birds, Hens, Ducks and Turkeys, for egg production. I have a 20m polytunnel on field marked "A" on the plan, which is in full production, with a variety of Tomatoes, Peppers, Cucumbers Aubergines, beetroot, onions and many other hothouse edible products.

The field marked "A" on the plan is nearly completely taken over to intensive vegetable production.

It is my intention, with assistance, to expand into fields marked "B" and "C" on the plan, to increase Organic vegetable production. This can only be achieved with considerable assistance, to reclaim this land from the inevitable creeping reoccupation, of nature.

THE BARN

I have leased and used the concrete barn on Lawrence's Brow, continuously, as a store, a place of rest and occasionally accommodation, at times, over the past 26 years, working the land, on this site.

Despite its unattractive appearance, the barn has proved to be soundly built, steadfast and dry, for all of these years.

However, in a storm of 2020 the roof suffered a total collapse, and was in an unrepairable condition, with the internal roof rafters having rotted out at the ends, despite still being structurally sound and dry away from the contact with the concrete walls.

This calamitous collapse necessitated immediate resolution, the structural repair and renovation of the roof and all associated and connected materials, to enable me to carry on production.

I have retained and used some of these original rafters in this ongoing renovation project.



RENOVATION

I have replaced the roof timbers and roof sheets with corrugated metal sheeting.

I took this opportunity to completely replace all elements of the roof, including purlins, barge boards, I included a breathable barrier membrane and wool insulation, finishing off internally, with sterling boarding and with revealed beams as before.

I have installed three Solar panels on the roof, which convert through an inverter, to produce 230v electricity inside, for lighting, phone charging, heating water for drinks and providing power to enable me to use my laptop inside to study and research. I have installed a 4G broadband wi fi hub to enable me to connect to the internet for these purposes.

There have, sadly, never been any bats inside the building, only nesting swallows, behind the original Bargeboards. Upon replacing the bargeboards I created 16 individual nest boxes in the void behind, with pop holes for varying bird sizes, and left the end of the barge boards open, to try to provide nesting sites for the previous Swallow family of some years habitation. I am thrilled to say my efforts have been rewarded and my swallows have returned, nested behind the bargeboards again and now have eggs in the nest. I also have sparrows and wrens nesting in the individual tenements I have created. No species has been negatively impacted by this work. In fact, I have increased habitation on many levels not previously in existence.

Externally, I have made no other changes to the original shuttered concrete structure, save securing some cracks, to prevent expansion.

Internally I have tanked out the floor and walls, installed a breathable membrane, filled the voids with wool fireproof insulation, then studded and boarded out with sterling board, to provide a clean, particle free environment.

I have replaced the doorframe and window, like for like, and now have a dry clean habitable building, with light and power.

I have flooring to rectify and external and internal decoration to be chosen.

I have also installed a smoke alarm, a fire extinguisher, fire blanket, and Carbon monoxide detector.

AMENITIES

Water is harvested from the roof, into two adjoined and sealed 2500L water tanks. These supply a sink inside the concrete barn, for cooking and washing up, and a hand wash basin in the adjacent shower shed structure. Water for human consumption, is in the form of bottled water.

There is a double bottle-fed tabletop gas hob for cooking in a modest way.

Six metres away from the concrete building, across some decking, and erected on a concrete slab I have an 8x6 ft Wooden shiplap Shower shed. The water for the small internal hand wash basin is drawn to the shed by wall mounted bilge pumps for hand wash.

Shower is in the form of a roof mounted solar shower bag, into an internal shower tray. The shower bag can be filled by a gravity fed standpipe attached outside to the two large water harvesting tanks.

The floor of the shed is sealed with Laminate oak flooring. There is an electric light inside, powered by the 3 main solar roof panels.

Inside this shed I also have a sawdust medium compost toilet.

The contents of the compost toilet, when emptied on demand, are added to and buried inside the site's general compost bay. After two years of Mesophilic and Thermophilic digestion the resulting inert compost will be used to feed the planting of some 150 indigenous trees I have to be planted on the site. The varieties I am currently planting are Rowan, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Wild Cherry, Silver birch, and Penduline Oak I will also be creating living Golden willow avenue of fencing, to approach the field gate, where this spent compost will also be used, to fertilise and boost growth. This spent compost will be used within the boundaries of my land, which are indicated by the blue line on the plan.

This project will not be a drain on many of the Islands resources, such as water or sewage issues and problems which are constantly, and more frequently arising, from general Island concentration, habitation and finite resource.

WASTE AND RECYCLING

Most field waste is composted in the main compost bay. Some is fed to the domestic birds I keep for eggs.

All recyclable waste is collected in a small internal swing bin, inside the concrete barn. Outside there is a standard household dustbin to take from the internal bin. I intercept James Morton each Wednesday, as he passes the field, on his waste and recycling rounds.

Wastewater from the main building sink goes to an underground granite rubble soakaway 10m from the building.

Wastewater from the modest 10L shower bag and the hand wash basin, in the shower shed, also goes to an underground, rubble filled soakaway, again 10m from the shed.

THE GROWING BUSINESS

The barn, used as seasonal accommodation for agricultural workers, and as study base, will be an essential, integral and vital part of the business. It will enable and allow the business to expand, by offering sound professional accommodation for those joining the business to produce much needed Organic local produce, in a business which is rapidly expanding, and developing.

I have fifty years of growing experience, my family previously owning a considerable market garden business in Coventry.

On this site I operate a no dig policy, using compost and cardboard to mulch to suppress weeds and feed the earth. I am a member of The Soil association and Slow food and grow 1005 Organically.

It is my intention to not only expand the Organic growing business, but to teach and organise soil field trials, in the form of Hugulkultur and Biochar. Methods of carbon fixing.

I envisage one day to be able to offer courses, with an end qualification, in Organic growing and practices.

I am also about to embark on a business, here on St Martins, which will be creating alternative eco fuels, to replace fossil fuels. This would be a year-round enterprise and would create extra full-time employment positions here on the island, this will sit alongside, in connection with my Organic Growing business.

I please ask the members to pass this application to enable my business and related agricultural future projects to flourish and grow in harmony and balance within this loved and treasured environment.

Toby Tobin-Dougan

12/6/2021



RECEIVED BY THE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
14 JUN 2021

Thurs 29th April, 2021 Season,

Runner beans, moonlight 43

Butter beans, franchi 54

Borlotti beans 18

Broad beans, masterpiece 420

French beans, Noir 40

Courgette, goldrush 18

G Courgette 9

Spuds, Charlotte 180

Pes, champion of England 1,100

Mange tout, snow pea 2,300

Onions, Sturon 450, Stuttgarter giant 40

Cauli 15

Beetroot, boltardy (outside 240,)

Sprouts, Brigitte 45

Broccoletti 30

Romanesco broccoli 30

Red cabbage, Red baron 30

Cabbage, Golden acre 15

Curly kale 15

Kohlrabi, purple, 15

Butternut squash, 12

Crown Prince squash 14

Spaghetti marrow 5

Giant mammoth pumpkin 6

Giant sunflowers 20

Endive frenzy 18 lettuce Grenoble 15

ANIMALS: Aylesbury ducks 7, Light Sussex hens 35, (5 new chicks). Bronze Turkey Stag, bronze turkey hen (on 13 eggs)
bourbon red Turkey hen (on 12 eggs)

21 golden Pheasant eggs currently in incubator

Tunnel 1

TOMATOES: Sungold, Golden boy, Miele, Botton Doro, honeymoon, (63 in total)

Cue, magnum 12, Gherkin 14, Aubergine violetta 19 Melon Canteloupe 15, Melon ananas 15,
Chilli lantern 6, Chilli Hot wax 15.

Chilli jalapeno 6,

Mix peppers long 10, Californian peppers 15

Lettuce Grenoble 14, Endive frenzy 12,

Beetroot boltardy 240

Peach tree, Peregrine, with five peaches forming

Sorrel, Basil classic, Lemon Basil, Cinnamon Basil, Sage, Oregano, Tarragon, Coriander, Rocket salad, wild rocket.

TUNNEL 2

Tomato san marino 30

Tomato st Pierre 30

Beef Tomato (Tuscany) 9

Cucumber Montebello 10

Cucumber magnum 5

Gherkin 6

Rose garlic 120

Onion, Sturon sets 420