

**Extension and Alterations to  
Bishop View, Porth Loo Lane  
Hugh Town, St.Mary's  
Isles of Scilly, TR21 0NF  
for  
Mark Wright**

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

June 2023  
(Revised September 2023)

**Background**

Mark Wright purchased Bishop View at the end of 2022. This is his 'permanent residence' where he lives with his partner, Ruth, and very lively dog, Clara. Mark was born and bred on Scilly and has a large family on the islands. His youngest daughter, Jess, is technically homeless and plans on moving into Bishop View in the near future. For many years Mark has aspired to owning a detached home outside the main town and with private grounds where he and his family can relax. Bishop View ticks all the boxes in this respect. His closest neighbours are golfers on the Isles of Scilly Golf Club next door! As the name of the property suggests, there is a wonderful view towards Bishop Rock Lighthouse some 12 kilometres away to the SW.



*Above: View of Bishop View from the main road. The roadside boundary belongs to Bishop View. Note the establish backdrop of mature trees behind the bungalow*

Although the bungalow is in a stunning location, it was constructed in the 1960's and is in need of some serious improvement and refurbishing. The sections below explain these shortfalls in more detail and the reasons for applying for permission to extend and improve. The Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with architect's drawings numbers 2024-P01 to P09 inclusive.

## Existing Property / Design Brief

Bishop View sits in 0.19 hectares of ground close to Porth Loo Lane leading up to Telegraph. Although it is perfectly habitable there are a number of building defects to attend to. For example, the pitched roof is the original asbestos-cement slate clad roof construction. There are sarking boards but no roofing felt so the roof leaks in bad weather when the wind is in the wrong direction. Internally some of the roof timbers have been removed by the previous owner (to accommodate his model railway in the roof space!). This has compromised the structural integrity of the roof. The flat roof appears to leak in hot weather, so this is almost certainly the result of extreme condensation. The external walls and roof are poorly insulated resulting in higher than normal energy costs. These building issues can all be addressed in the proposed new extension and alterations. See photo on drawing number 2024-P08 and below.



*Above: The pitched roof over the garage, corner of the main hipped roof and flat roof connecting link*

Shortly after purchasing the property, Mark Wright asked structural engineer, Mark Harris, to inspect the fabric of the building and advise on the potential for altering the roof. The structural opinion was that the walls were sufficiently robust to support the weight of new room-in-the-roof trusses incorporating a first floor. A new post-and-beam frame would be required to support the rear section of the roof and this has been incorporated into the new designs. Most importantly it would not be necessary to demolish the shell of the existing bungalow. Having established this, Mark and Ruth have already restored parts of the interior and invested in a new £10k kitchen (see drawing number 2024-P08).

The architectural **design brief** for Bishop View is to achieve the following:

- Building improvements to rectify the technical problems outlined above. In particular the property must be made water-tight and much better insulated
- Additional Bedroom Accommodation: The bungalow currently only has one main bedroom and a small single back bedroom. A better master bedroom with plenty of space for furniture and storage is required
- Improved living accommodation: The dining room is very tight at the moment and the dining table doubles as a home office. There is an opportunity here to provide a new quiet living space in room-in-the-roof accommodation and convert the lounge into a dining room next to the kitchen



- Additional Storage: There is virtually no storage space in the bungalow at present so more space is required for either built-in cupboards or storage units
- The bungalow layout is rather uninspiring with individual rooms accessed from a 'T' shaped corridor. The applicant would like to create a better first impression on entry and some more interesting internal spaces
- The external appearance also looks dated and a facelift is needed. The additions of the flat-roofed extensions to the rear (with their condensation problems!) do nothing to enhance the appearance of the original hipped roof bungalow. The garage has presumably been added to the original property which now has a mix of hipped roofs and gables

## Proposed Designs



*Photo-montage view looking back along Porth Loo Lane towards Bishop View*

### **A. Use / Need**

There are no current restrictions of the residential use of Bishop View so it could be occupied as a permanent dwelling, holiday home or Air B&B. Although there are 'options' as things stand, the applicant fully intends to occupy his house on a permanent basis, and has no plans to change this. In fact, at the point of sale, the vendors were encouraged by the prospect of selling their home to a local family who intended to occupy the bungalow throughout the year. They were selected as preferred purchasers in the face of competition from a number of potential buyers. Although this is to be a permanent residence for the foreseeable future, the applicant does not want to have the property devalued by the imposition of a principal residence planning condition.

Mark is one of a large Scillonian family and has lived on St.Mary's for 52 years. His youngest daughter, Jess, is in the process of moving to Bishop View and has already registered to vote here. Mark's partner, Ruth, has parents living in St.Ives who visit Scilly on a regular basis. Her father, Viv Stratton, is a naturalist who has conducted guided wildlife tours on the islands including RSPB group visits travelling by Scillonian. Her parents, both in their 70's, would ideally like to stay with Mark and Ruth but have recently had to pay for expensive holiday accommodation. By creating a new master bedroom at first floor level, the ground floor double would become available for family visitors.

Mark and Ruth also run two local businesses – Wright Construction and 'The Store' - and employ a significant number of staff. Home working is an essential reality if these companies are to be run successfully. In addition to extra bed-space, the applicant also needs a quiet home working area. The addition of a first-floor area within the roof gives Mark and Ruth a number of options. As shown on the plans, a home office could be incorporated in the wing off the new dining room – or an alternative would be the first-floor landing taking advantage of the south facing rural views.

## **B. Amount**

As the planning drawings show, the internal area of the bungalow including a small attic with standing headroom, but excluding the garage, is 112.8m<sup>2</sup> (for all areas quoted in this section refer to existing and proposed plans). Excluding the attic, the bungalow provides 102.6m<sup>2</sup> of accommodation. Before the garage, connecting link and rear extensions were added, the compact hipped roof bungalow would have been smaller than national minimum housing standards.

The additional area generated by raising and re-constructing the roof increases the size of the attic from 10.2m<sup>2</sup> to 51.1m<sup>2</sup>. The overall internal size of Bishop View will then become 153.7m<sup>2</sup> representing an increase of floor space of 40.9m<sup>2</sup>. There is no increase in the footprint of the building. Local Plan Policy LC8(1) states that extensions should not increase the size of dwellings above the minimum national standard plus 30% unless justification can be provided. The minimum standard for a 2-bed / 6-person house is 120m<sup>2</sup>. By adding the permissible 30% the overall permissible size would increase to 133m<sup>2</sup>. The proposed alterations therefore exceed this limit by a modest 20.7m<sup>2</sup>. This report sets out the justification for a larger home to meet the applicant's needs in accordance with policy.

It should also be noted that the national minimum standards assume efficient space planning and design. They are clearly an appropriate guide for new housing but do not take into account the constraints imposed by existing buildings. In theory a poorly designed existing property with inefficient circulation spaces could meet the minimum standards but would not be fit for living in. This is very much the case with Bishop View where a high proportion of the space is devoted to corridors and there is virtually no storage space. If the bungalow were to be gutted internally and re-planned, some of these shortfalls could possibly be addressed, but this would hardly be a sustainable solution. Also, Mark and Ruth have already installed a new kitchen and redecorated throughout and do not want to destroy their hard work to date.

## **C. Layout**

At design stage, a key decision was selecting the right position for the staircase. A straight stair was preferred to one with winders or dog-legs and good headroom is clearly needed where the stair alights at first floor level. The preferred position is shown on the proposed plans with the staircase replacing existing ground floor cupboards. The bottom step is immediately obvious when entering Bishop View and an added advantage is widening the corridor to create a more spacious hallway. There are no other real changes to the ground floor. At first floor level the stair leads to a landing with a large dormer window to provide plenty natural light. This space could be used for a small desk in addition to providing access to principal rooms. The new living

room faces South taking advantage of the views towards Bishop Rock Lighthouse in the distance. Double glazed doors with an outdoor Juliet Balcony will allow light and sunshine into the living room and overlook the long road-side garden. The master bedroom is at the opposite side of the house with a window facing the neighbouring copse, and a roof-window for additional daylight.

#### **D. Scale**

As mentioned above, the proposed designs do not alter the footprint of Bishop View. However, there is a vertical increase in height with the eaves raised by approximately 350mm and the ridge increased by 1.45m. This is the minimum height increase possible to generate reasonable usable first floor space with a canopy internal ceiling profile. Looking at the site as a whole, the most dominant features are mature conifers surrounding the site to the West and North (see photo on previous page). Although these have not been measured accurately, they appear to be in the region of 50ft tall. The relatively small increase in roof height will have little impact in relation to the enveloping landscape. It should also be noted that, from road level, the apparent height of the bungalow is dictated by the line of the eaves. As the height is only being increased by 350mm, the visual impact of this change will be minimal.



*Above: Photomontage proposed view, approaching Bishop View from the East. The existing roof profiles can be seen ghosted behind the freehand overlay*

#### **E. Landscaping**

One of the attractions of Bishop View, when Mark Wright first viewed it, was the presence of established trees and shrubs within and around the grounds. There is very little need to add to this ready-made landscaping. The applicant has already spent time and energy improving the

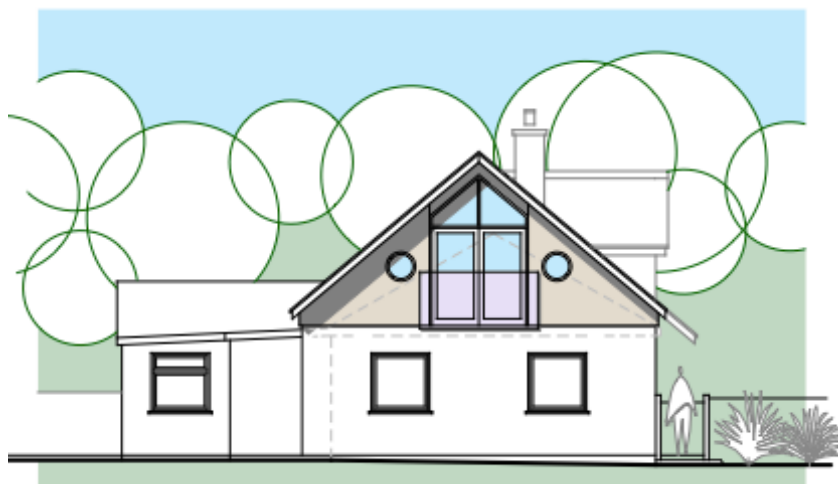
gardens and making the land secure for his dog, Clara. This work does not require planning approval but it does demonstrate the applicant's commitment to maintaining the grounds in good order.

## F. Appearance

The changes to the roof design and fenestration will transform the appearance of Bishop View. The new gabled roof does change the character of the existing bungalow that has no real architectural merit. Proportions and alignment have been carefully considered. For example, on the front elevation (see below) the new first floor dormer window has been centred on the bedroom window below. Roof windows also align with the window and garage door below. The dragged-down roof over the garage and front door serves a practical purpose, creating shelter – it also introduces a pleasing asymmetrical effect to add interest to the property.



The South facing gable elevation is the other prominent face, seen from Porth Loo Lane when approaching from the Hugh Town direction. Again, care has been taken to achieve the right proportions. The new roof has been centred on the ground floor living room windows. The first floor living room will have an impressive seaward outlook and the glazing will flood the interior with natural light. The two port-hole windows will provide glimpse views from a sitting position. The 40-degree traditional roof pitch will be perfect for a new natural slate roof. Windows will be white to match the new ground floor windows in either upvc or, in the case of the larger feature windows, marine grade aluminium. The earlier rear wing has been omitted from the designs, reducing the impact of the extensions from this angle.





## Impact on Neighbours / Consultation

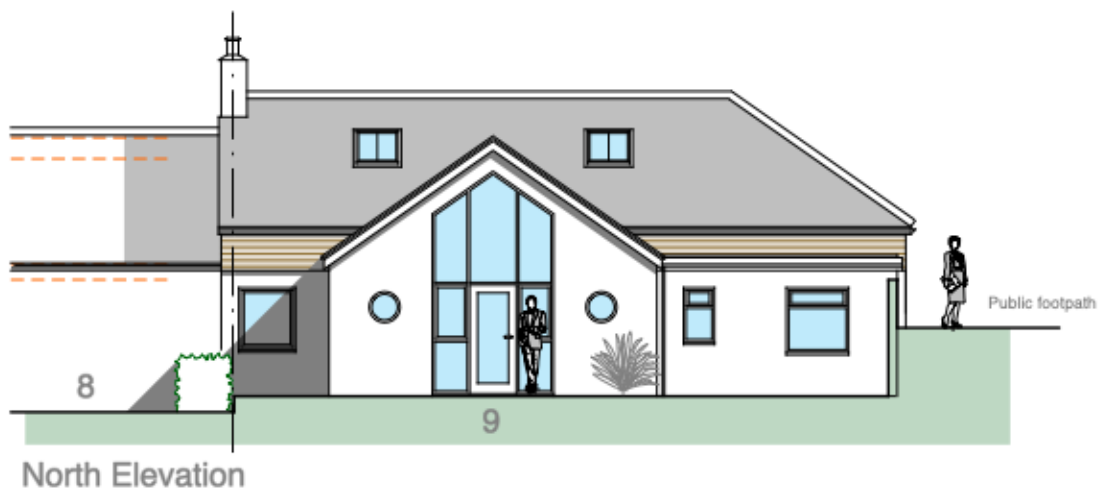
The beauty of this project in terms of impact on the neighbourhood, is its rural location as shown from the aerial photo below. The nearest property is at Telegraph over 300m away by road to the North. From here Bishop View is completely hidden by the topography and tree belt. The raising of the roof will clearly have no impact on housing in this area. The golf course and surrounding farmland is also clearly visible on the satellite image. Photo-montage images have been prepared to show the appearance from Porth Loo Lane – some of which are enclosed in this report (also see drawing 2024-P09).



Before preparing this planning application, a 'Pre-App Enquiry' was submitted to the Isles of Scilly Council – Ref no. PA-23-023. Although no formal response has been received, useful feedback from Lisa Walton in the Planning Department was obtained at a meeting at the Council Offices on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April. The general principle of improving and extending Bishop View was supported and encouraged. A number of specific points were raised at the meeting as listed below:

- **First Floor Balcony:** The original designs incorporated a walk-out timber balcony from the first-floor lounge - see sketch designs in the 'scale' section above. It was felt that this would be unduly prominent and could set a precedent for other balconies. Although there are a number of examples of similar new structures on Scilly this feature has been omitted and replaced with a Juliet balcony
- **Size:** It was noted that the extensions are likely to exceed the target maximum size for extensions of no more than the national minimum standard plus 30%. However, this was not seen as a hard-and-fast rule and, as long as a case could be made for exceeding this target, this would be considered. The reasons for seeking to increase and improve living standards have hopefully been explained in this document
- **Principal Residence Condition:** The new Council policy of trying to encourage applicants to adopt a 'principal residence' planning condition was explained. Ms Walton stated that this would be a condition rather than a more binding legal Section 106 Agreement and could be reviewed if circumstances changed. Although it is Mark Wright's intention to keep Bishop View as a main residence for the foreseeable future, he does not want to agree to a condition that could devalue the property in future.

- **Traditional v Contemporary Design Approach:** Attention was drawn to a number of traditional design solutions that have recently been approved by The Council, in particular those submitted by the Dutchy of Cornwall. By contrast there are a number of contemporary designs that have been approved and constructed, some of which are illustrated below. One relevant project is the recent raising of the roof at number 9 Little Porth to gain first floor accommodation. The cross-sections through the two buildings are virtually identical. Modern design elements make an architectural statement such as the gable on the front elevation incorporating the front door. This revitalised building sits comfortably at the end of the terrace. The main difference between the two projects is the urban setting of Little Porth compared to the very rural planning application site. In the case of Bishop View there are no immediate neighbours, influencing the design approach.



*Top: 9 Little Porth. The original roof aligned with number 8 next door  
Below: Examples of successful contemporary designs on Scilly*

## **Access**

Where possible accessibility improvements are being made. The hallway will become more spacious and the decision to introduce a straight flight would facilitate a stairlift at some point in the future if needed. As the property is currently a bungalow with a level ground floor throughout it is already suitable for disabled users or visitors. At first floor level, generous glazing and roof windows will allow plenty of natural light into the living spaces, helping anyone who is visually impaired. The extensions and alterations will conform with Part M of the Building Regulations dealing with accessibility. For example, power outlets will be easy to reach from a wheelchair as will light switches and electrical fittings. The roof extension over the front door and approach to the house will improve access to the property especially in poor weather conditions.



## Sustainability

There is a real opportunity to improve the thermal performance of Bishop View by utilising green technologies, selecting the right building materials and building in a sensitive manner. The following sustainable 'gains' have been adopted in the design project:

- **High Levels of Insulation:** The new roof and gable walls will incorporate high levels of thermal insulation. The new 2022 Building Regulations require much higher insulation standards and these regulations will clearly be adhered to. It should be noted that the existing building has minimal insulation between ceiling joists and none in the external walls so there will be a significant saving in energy costs. The flat roofed areas at the back of the property will also be replaced incorporating compliant insulation
- **Solar Panels:** Although there is no proposal to clutter the new roof with solar panels, the applicant intends to construct an array of South facing solar panels in his garden at the back of the house. This will be completely screened from public view
- **Roof ventilation:** Vented roofs will be constructed throughout avoiding the current condensation problems
- **Materials:** The gable walls will be clad with either sustainably sourced cedar or composite cladding. Either material will be low maintenance. The change in roof cladding from asbestos cement tiles to natural slate will also be a significant improvement. Where existing materials can be salvaged and re-used this will be done
- **Water harvesting:** Roof water will be harvested in a number of water butts and used for watering the garden, cleaning, etc
- **Heating:** The existing oil-fired boiler and central heating system will be removed and replaced with a sustainable new installation. Ground and air source heating are currently being investigated as efficient heating solutions. An advantage of the rural location and land availability is the option to install a ground source heating system. At the back of the current bungalow, the unsightly chimney flue serving the oil fire boiler will be removed
- **Sound Insulation:** The new first floor will be fully insulated with Rockwool 'Soundbloc' or similar to create high levels of sound insulation between the ground and first floor. Internal partitions will also be fully insulated so, for the first time, there will be quiet spaces within the home
- **Fire Protection:** The original bungalow relied on battery operated fire alarms for fire detection and there were no other fire prevention measures. The extension and refurbishment project will create a fire protected escape route to the front door. New heat and smoke detectors will be introduced, connected to mains electricity. Where new plasterboard is used for internal wall of ceiling cladding, 'Fireline' board will be used for maximum fire resistance
- **Considerate Construction:** Mark is keen to ensure that the construction process minimises any disruption for neighbours or the local community. There is plenty of space on site for storage of materials and some parking. A Construction Management Plan will be prepared to control working hours, noise levels, waste control, etc. A Planning Condition to agree a mutually acceptable plan is welcomed

## Summary

Bishop View is clearly a property with great potential for improvement. Although the building has no immediate neighbours, it is nonetheless visible from a distance around St.Mary's. It is therefore important to achieve the right architectural result. The planning designs have been carefully considered and reviewed over the last 6 months. A bold decision has been taken to improve the character and appearance of the uninspiring hipped-roof building with its flat-roofed extensions.

New designs are relatively simple in form but attractive and well detailed. As one of the island's main building contractors, Mark is well placed to ensure that the architectural vision is properly delivered.

Since the application was submitted in July 2023, feedback has been received the chief planning officer and Lead Member for planning during a site visit. In response to this feedback, the designs have been refined and reduced in scale. An earlier first floor 'rear wing' has been omitted to reduce the area of the extension. This report has also been updated to include a fuller description of new sustainable measures and provide more justification for the project. We therefore believe that we have responded in an appropriate way to Local Plan policies with a sympathetic design that will enhance the quality of the immediate neighbourhood.

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July 2023 (Revised 21 September 2023)