

**Reconstruction of Entrance Porch
At Charlotte House
Garrison Lane
Hugh Town, St.Mary's
Isles of Scilly, TR21 0JD
for
Bryan and Carole Ronan**

PLANNING STATEMENT

February 2024



Background

Bryan and Carole Ronan have recently purchased Charlotte House, an attractive granite-built property in the centre of Hugh Town. The house is not listed but, like the rest of the islands, it is situated in a protected Conservation Area. The house has been well maintained by the previous owners and the interior has been furnished to exceptionally high standards. The only change the new owners would like to make is the replacement of the small existing porch with a larger more functional structure. This statement supports a planning application for the new porch and should be read in conjunction with planning drawings 2039-P01 to P03 inclusive.

Existing House / Design Brief

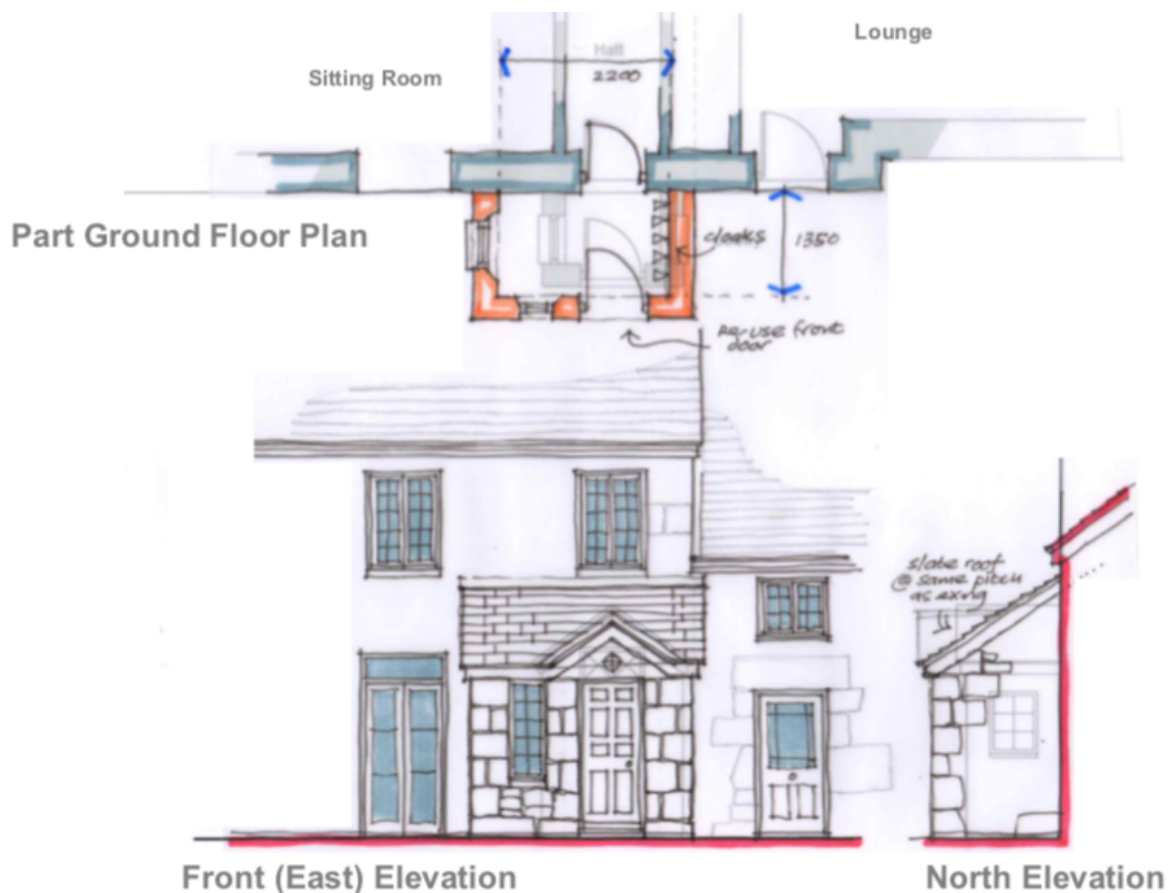
Access to the front door of Charlotte House is through the South facing garden off Garrison Lane, along a planted arbour. The pathway leads to a gabled entrance porch with a solid timber panelled door and a timber lattice fanlight above. The stone-built porch is an attractive feature

on the front of the property. The doorway has been centred on the window above and the pitched roof is clad in natural slate matching the main roof.

Although the porch sits well on the front elevation, it is extremely small internally, with a floor area of less than 1.2m². It is just possible for someone to enter the porch, close the door then unlock the inner doorway. However, the same operation would not be possible for two people and manoeuvring a wheelchair through the confined space would be out of the question. Also, Bryan and Carole own two Labrador dogs who are trained to live in their own 'zone', keeping the main house dog-free and clean. A larger porch would be more accessible and would be a perfect space for the dogs with a hanging area for outdoor clothing.

Pre-Application Planning Enquiry

A pre-application enquiry was submitted to the Isles of Scilly Council at the beginning of December 2023, before the applicants completed on the purchase of their new home. The reference number for the application is PA/23/121. The sketch drawing below was one of the documents submitted with the enquiry.



Andrew King in the planning department replied very promptly on 6th December 2024, saying 'Thank you for your pre-application enquiry. I have had a look at this with Lisa and there is no major concern with the principle of the proposal which would only results in a minimal increase in floorspace. The only comment we have is whether the gable/dormer feature is necessary so if you wish to include it then a justification for its inclusion would be good.' It was also noted that entrance porches often fall under the banner of 'permitted development' but that the sketch designs illustrated above just exceed the area limits. This encouraging response gave the applicants confidence to move forward with the purchase, knowing that planning permission should be forthcoming in due course.

Proposed Designs

Plans submitted with the planning application show the existing layout and proposed designs. The first objective will be to carefully dismantle the existing structure carefully removing the slate roof, front door and granite – all of which will be set to one side and re-used. The front elevation of Charlotte House will be photographed before work commences and the stonework will be numbered and laid flat on the ground to aid the reconstruction work.

The new larger porch will provide approximately 3.1m² of internal space, just over twice the size of the existing porch. It will be extended in three directions but primarily to the left towards the sitting room French doors. The position of the front door will stay the same, aligning with the inner door, window above and existing footpath. The extra space generated to the left would be perfect for the dogs or for wheelchair access. To the right of the front door, hanging space for coats and a boot rack is created in a shallow recess by omitting the existing window.

In architectural terms, the gabled design will be replaced by a 'lean-to' mono-pitch roof structure clad with slate at the same pitch as the main roof. A small gable has been incorporated above the entrance door to reflect the current gable. A tall vertical 10-pane timber window will throw extra daylight into the porch and echo the proportion of the existing fenestration. A new window on the West side will be openable for natural ventilation. The existing panelled front door will be repaired and re-used.

Charlotte House has an interesting asymmetrical appearance with the taller proportions of the main dwelling contrasting with the much lower headroom and eaves height on the East wing. Although doors and windows align vertically, their positions on the front elevation appear to have been determined more by the internal function of rooms than outward appearance. The off-setting of the entrance porch and departure from the symmetrical existing gabled porch is therefore entirely appropriate and in keeping with the style of the property.

In response to the planning officer comment about the gable over the doorway, we feel that this is an important feature of the design as it draws attention to the front door and makes something of an architectural statement. The existing gabled porch at right angles to the Charlotte House roof is an attractive addition to the original property. The new gable over the front door will echo this detail albeit on a smaller scale. The gable itself will be a perfect location for an external light helping to illuminate the entrance pathway at night.



Extract from planning drawings showing front elevation

Summary

This is a relatively minor householder planning application that only just exceeds the permitted development limits. The new porch is completely hidden from public view behind a tall stone garden wall, as is much of the front elevation of the house. It will, however, make a big difference to the applicants who will appreciate the improved space and access on a daily basis.

It will be a sustainable form of development. Many of the building materials will be re-used (stone, front door and hopefully some roof slates) and those that cannot be re-used at Charlotte House will hopefully be put to good use elsewhere. For example, the concrete slab will be broken up and delivered to the quarry for crushing and re-use as hard core. Timber from the roof structure can also be de-nailed re-used. The applicants have a convenient workshop where components can be re-cycled – something the previous occupants proved to be expert at.

Great care will be taken in the construction to match the quality of the existing house. The object will be to create a new porch that will blend seamlessly with Charlotte House and will not appear as an obvious extension. The applicants welcome any feedback during the application process and will do their best to respond to queries.

Michael R Bradbury RIBA
Studio St.Ives
4 Gabriel Street
St.Ives
TR26 2LU

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