

**Alterations to Lowenva, Church Road
Hugh Town, St. Mary's
Isles of Scilly
TR21 0NA
for
Adrian and Sarah Metson**

PLANNING STATEMENT

September 2025

Background

Adrian and Sarah Metson purchased Lowenva in the summer of 2025. They moved into the bungalow on completion and are pleased with their new home. They realised at the outset that certain improvements would have to be made and they have spent the last few months preparing a strategy for upgrading the property.

The first planned phase of improvement is the replacement of all of the existing windows and entrance door with new double glazing. This brief report describes and explains the proposals which require planning approval. It should be read in conjunction with drawings 2025A-P01 to P05 inclusive. Extracts from some of these are included in this document.

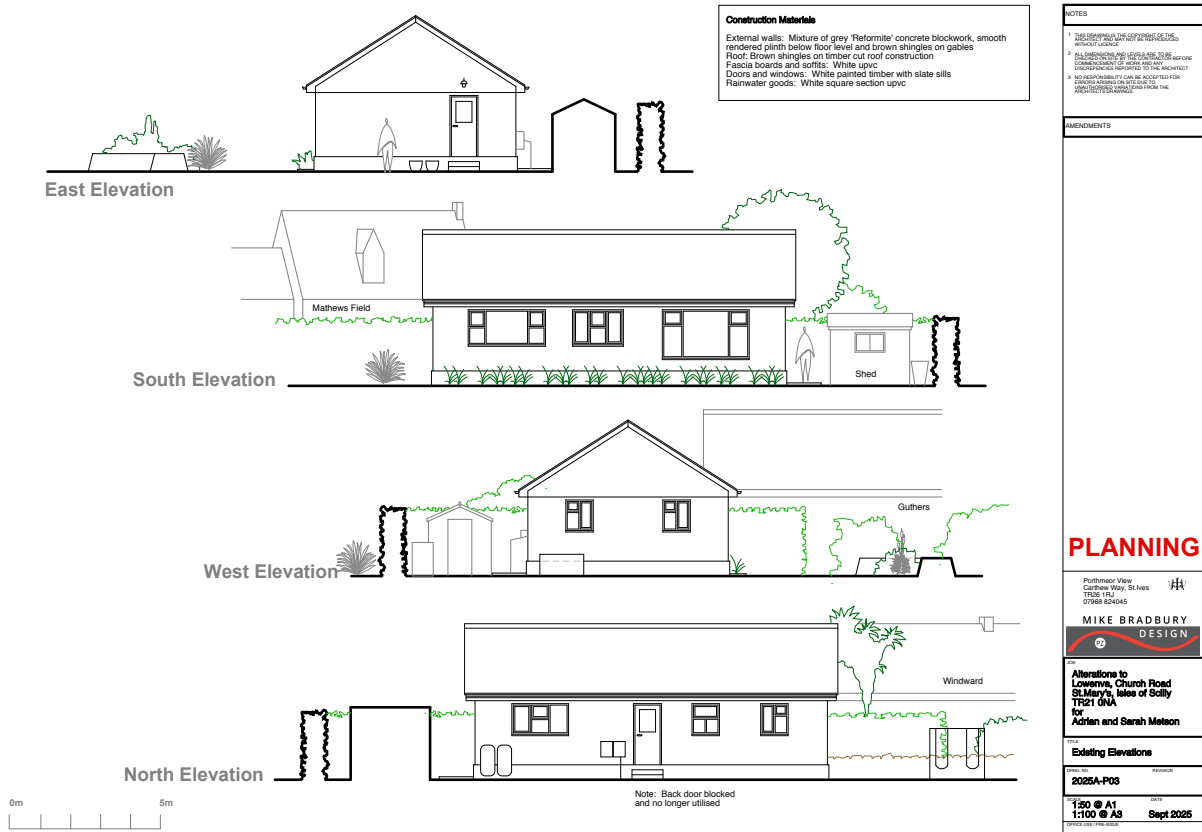


Existing Building

Lowenva is the former home of the late prime minister, Harold Wilson and his wife, Mary. Since they passed away the property has changed hands a few times. Some internal refurbishment has been carried out – such as the installation of a new kitchen - but the internal layout is basically unchanged. There are one or two curious features in the bungalow. For example, the only accessible doorway is hidden from view around the back of the property, out of sight of curious holiday-makers.

One of the shortfalls of Lowenva is a very poor G-rated EPC certificate. This is the lowest grading signifying very poor energy efficiency which will lead to high energy bills. Some improvements can be made without planning consent – such as increasing the thickness of roof insulation. One of the biggest contributing factors to the low rating is the single glazed windows, many of which are deteriorating with rot affecting the frames and casements. The area of glazing is also a contributing factor with no fewer than eight windows and two glazed doors. The windows on the south elevation are relatively large with glazing covering approximately the same wall area as masonry. Replacing leaking single glazed windows with high-performance double-glazed units will dramatically improve the thermal performance of the bungalow.

Another quirk of the property is the redundant back door (see North Elevation below). It is curious that the compact kitchen originally had two doors in close proximity using up valuable wall space for kitchen units. It is hardly surprising that previous owners have installed units and worktops across the second 'back door' making it redundant. Rather than removing the door and making good the opening, the door has been retained as a 'dummy' feature. The applicants are seeking to address this with the current planning application.





1. Bathroom window on rear elevation
2. Bedroom window on rear elevation showing deterioration at base of frame
3. Windows on the West facing gable elevation receive the full force of the prevailing winds and are suffering badly as a result
4. Bedroom 1 window on front elevation

One of the unfortunate features of the windows is the lack of a projecting timber sill with a rebated drip on the underside. Rainwater can therefore run down the face of the window and collect at the base of the window encouraging rotting and decay. The redundant back door is illustrated below in a similar poor state of repair. Kitchen worktops run past the back of the doorway.



Proposed Designs

The new Upvc windows will mirror the proportions, appearance and colour of the existing timber ones. By contrast with the existing fenestration, the new units will have a greatly improved 'U value' of between 1.2 and 1.4 W/m²K. The applicants are keen to install high performance windows with regards to the frames and glazing. One way of achieving these values is to incorporate a high efficiency thermal inner pane of glass on the sealed units. The old back door will be removed and a new window installed matching the proportions of one of the adjacent windows. The width of the doorway is almost exactly the same as the bathroom and bedroom 2 windows so a consistent design will be achieved. The opening below the window sill will be infilled with studwork and insulated with rigid foil faced board. Again, the insulation value will be to modern building regulation standards and significantly better than the bungalow's external walls.

Replacing the windows and main door will provide an opportunity to inspect the external wall build-up and check for any defects. For example, it may be possible to install thermal cavity closers before fixing the new frames. This is a technical detail and the outward appearance will not be affected. The removal of the timber windows will be undertaken carefully to avoid damaging the openings. The slate sills will need protection and the new kitchen window sill will be constructed from two layers of natural roofing slate with a cement infill to match.

Technical advances in recent years mean that components should now last for up to 35 years so the replacement windows should be in place for the foreseeable future. Unlike timber, they will require minimal maintenance.

Sustainability / Waste Management

When the existing windows are removed, they will be 'de-glazed' and the glass will be taken to the Recycling Centre at Porthmellon where the glass can be crushed for re-use. The timber frames and casements can be cut into manageable sections for firewood. The same principle applies to the timber back door. There will be no other waste products. Adrian and Sarah have already spoken to a local contractor about carrying out the installation using windows sourced on the mainland. This will avoid bringing tradesmen over from the mainland. The windows will hopefully be supplied by a local Cornish company who regularly delivers to Scilly and is familiar with the challenge of carefully packaging windows up using 'A' frames and delivering them to the Steamship Company.

Work can be carried out while the applicants are in residence, moving around the bungalow tackling each room in turn. The operation should be completed within a fortnight. At the end of each working day the building will be made weather-tight. As the applicants will be keeping a close eye on progress, they will be able to ensure that work is carried out in a neighbourly manner during normal weekday working hours. On completion it will be the contractor's duty to make good and dispose of packaging. Any left-over fixings that can be re-used will be taken down to the contractor's store rooms.

Summary

The previous owners of Lowenva carried out a number of improvements such as surfacing the driveway, re-building the stone boundary wall and keeping the garden in good order. The applicants are also keen to maintain and improve their home.

The installation of Upvc windows is a logical first step in the process. In such a harsh marine environment, these manufactured high-performance units make sound common-sense. They have been installed by the Isles of Scilly Council on many of their properties and can be seen on many of the neighbouring homes on Church Street. Immediately next door, all of the windows at Guthers have been replaced with white Upvc replacing many of the original ones in the last 12 months.

Lowenva is clearly visible from the main road so the 'facelift' to the building will be clearly obvious. Once completed there will be a marked benefit to Adrian and Sarah in terms of reduced energy bills and maintenance.



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