

18 February 2026

## Design Justification Statement: Replacement Roof Covering

**Description**\_ Extension and alterations

**Address**\_ Esperance, McFarland's Down, St.Mary's, Isles of Scilly, TR21 0NS

**Applicant**\_ Abi & Matt Meaton

### Existing Character

Esperance is a late 20th century bungalow located within the McFarland's Down settlement on St Mary's, formed by detached dwellings of modern construction and character.

The existing building is constructed of rendered blockwork with modern fenestration and is presently covered with shallow-pitch concrete roof tiles, a material typical of its era but of limited architectural merit, and offering no contribution to the historic character of the Conservation Area.

Traditional roofing materials on the islands include natural slate as a durable covering, shipped from the mainland, and capable of withstanding the exposed climate.

*The traditional roofing material on the islands was thatch from reeds. Until the last century buildings in exposed positions had their thatch secured by weighted straw ropes which were used to protect against stormy weather. Thatched roofs have all disappeared from the Isles of Scilly.*

*Slates imported from the mainland became popular in the 19th and 20th Centuries, particularly Delabole 'smalls' and 'peggies'. Slate roofs are frequently scantled (small slates cut roughly, at random widths usually diminishing from bottom to top of the roof slopes, often bedded on mortar and trimmed all the way round). Bridgwater double roman red clay pantiles (curved S shape) were also used. (Isles of Scilly Design Guide, p47)*

Across the islands, there is an established tradition of using robust, practical materials that weather well, are visually subdued in tone, and reflect the pragmatic, resource-conscious approach to construction that is intrinsic to the character of the Isles of Scilly.

### Isles of Scilly Design Guide

The Isles of Scilly Design Guide emphasises that all development and alteration must be driven by a clear understanding of local character, and that materials should be robust, durable, and appropriate to the island environment, reflecting the established relationship between buildings, landscape, and practical constraints such as exposure, resource availability, and transport limitations.

### Roof Design

As existing, the building does not exhibit any features that are distinctive of the local traditional character, and the concrete tiles are not worthy of conservation.



The proposed replacement with dark grey profiled architectural metal sheeting will provide a crisp, uniform finish that is visually recessive and appropriate to the modern context offering variety and interest.

The dark tone will reduce visual prominence within the landscape, consistent with the Design Guide's emphasis on ensuring buildings are integrated sensitively into their surroundings and do not appear visually dominant.

The simplicity of the architectural sheeting reinforces the modest form of the bungalow and aligns with the aims of providing straightforward, functional construction responding to climatic and environmental conditions.

In practical terms, profiled metal sheeting represents a lightweight, durable, and sustainable roofing solution well suited to the Isles of Scilly. Its reduced structural load, longevity, and ease of maintenance support the long-term stewardship of the building, consistent with the Design Guide's principle that buildings should be capable of enduring the island environment and adapting over time.

Furthermore, its lightweight nature makes it efficient to transport and install using local supply chains and contractors, reflecting the Design Guide's recognition of the importance of material efficiency and realistic construction approaches in the island context.

Holistically, alongside the other building improvements, the proposed replacement roof covering will enhance the visual quality of the building, provide a more coherent and appropriate material response, and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Isles of Scilly Conservation Area.

The proposal accords with the Isles of Scilly Design Guide by improving durability, reinforcing local character, and ensuring the continued integration of the building within its landscape setting.

Prepared by:

**Andrew Golay MRTPI**  
Chartered Town Planner