

**Re-Roofing and alterations to Lowenva  
Church Road  
Hugh Town, St. Mary's  
Isles of Scilly  
TR21 0NA  
for  
Adrian and Sara Metson**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

February 2026

**Background**

Adrian and Sara Metson purchased Lowenva in the summer of 2025. They are in the process of improving and altering their new home and have already replaced the old timber windows that had reached the end of their life-span. A planning application for this work was submitted to the Isles of Scilly Council in September 2025 – Ref P/25/080/HH – and approved in November 2025.

The next phase of improvement is the removal of the old timber shingles on the roof and two gables (see photo below). This brief report describes and explains the proposals which require planning approval. It should be read in conjunction with drawings 2025B-P01 to P05 inclusive. Extracts from some of these are included in this document.



## Existing Building

Lowenva is a robustly built bungalow with masonry cavity walls and a well-constructed timber 'cut roof' – see photo below. The properties in the immediate vicinity all seem to have been built around the same time in the 1960's. A common feature – unusual on Scilly – is the use of timber shingles for roof cladding. Surprisingly, they have survived remarkably well on Lowenva and even weathered Storm Goretti at the beginning of January 2026. The new owners of Guthers, immediately to the East, have recently replaced their shingle roof with natural slates. The more traditional roofing material is aesthetically pleasing, practical and long-lasting.

The shingles at Lowenva are traditionally fixed direct to battens without a roofing felt underlay allowing them to breathe and dry out after rainfall. This is a cause for concern as driving rain could penetrate gaps between any gaps or around defective shingles.



The gables on either end of the bungalow are similarly clad in shingles on un-insulated timber studwork. There is a thin layer of insulation at ceiling level that could be improved as part of the proposed re-roofing operation.

## Proposed Improvements

The main element of this planning application is the removal of the shingles and their replacement with grey natural slates. Slates will be dry-laid on new tanalised battens on roofing felt providing that second line of defence against the elements. A neat dry-fixed grey angle ridge will be fitted and the fascias and verges will be made good. The whole operation will be carried out quickly and efficiently by island-based building contractors.



The image above is a close-up view of the front of Guthers. Roof cladding here was replaced in the spring of 2025 under planning consent P/24/062/HH. The intention at Lowenva is to use the same natural roofing slate to match the neighbouring property.

The same cedar cladding as Guthers is also proposed for vertical cladding on the gables. In the case of Lowenva, the installation will be very straightforward as one type of cladding is being replaced by another. The overhang at the verge will therefore be maintained. The contrast between the two natural building materials – grey slate and untreated cedar – works particularly well. The installation of the centrally positioned gable windows will provide natural light in the attic and will be an attractive feature, particularly on the prominent roadside elevation.



*Above: Re-roofing Lowenva, painting the entire property and cladding the gables has transformed the property*

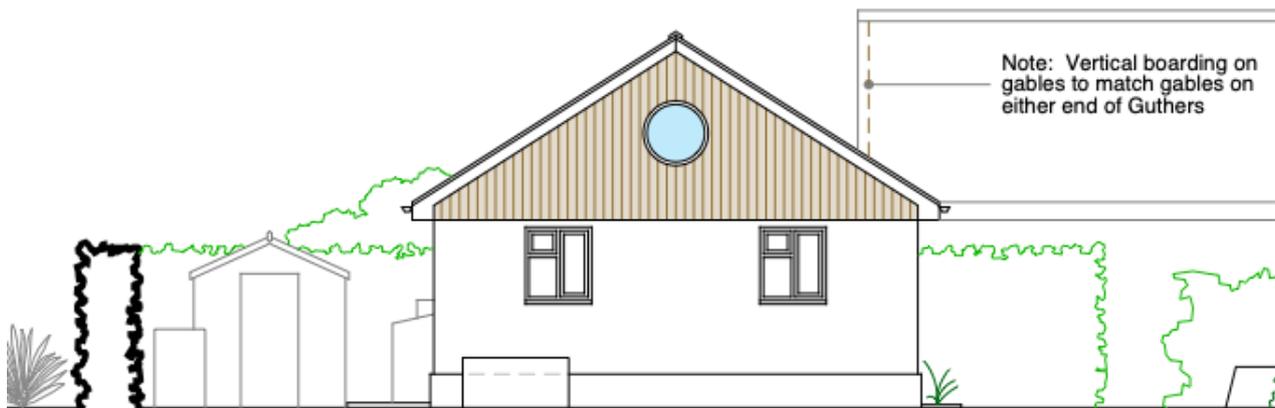
## Sustainability / Waste Management

Timber shingles will be carefully removed and stock-piled for possible re-use on garden shed or outbuildings. The timber cut-roof is in good condition so there should be no need to replace rafters or principal timbers. Timber battens are thought to be untreated so can either be salvaged or cut down for use as firewood. Where timber studs are removed for the installation of gable windows, they will be salvaged and de-nailed for re-use. There will be no other waste products.

Adrian and Sara have already spoken to a local contractor about carrying out the re-roofing and building works. This will avoid the need to bring tradesmen over from the mainland. Building materials will be sourced from local builder's merchants on the mainland.

The opportunity will be taken to improve the existing roof insulation at ceiling level. The intention is to increase this to a total thickness of 300mm in agreement with Cornwall Council Building Control. Conversations have already taken place with building inspectors who welcome any thermal improvements. At the time of purchase, Lowenva scored a very poor G-rated EPC rating. This is the lowest grading signifying very poor energy efficiency which will lead to high energy bills. Installing new double-glazed windows will have already improved the performance of the bungalow – this next phase of building improvement will also make a significant contribution.

Work can be carried out while the applicants are in residence, by careful programming, keeping a close eye on the weather and working diligently until the roof is weathertight. As re-roofing operations go, this is about as straightforward as they come with two roof planes and good access for the erection of scaffold. There are no projections through the roof such as chimneys or roof windows to complicate things. The whole operation should take no longer than a fortnight. At the end of each working day in the early stages, the building will be made secure and weather-tight.



Above: Extract from planning application drawings

## Summary

This is a straightforward application for sensible building improvements to the former home of the late prime minister, Sir Harold Wilson. A precedent for has arguably been created by similar works to Guthers that have received compliments from neighbours and visitors. The changes to the roof and gable will improve the appearance of the property. It faces Church Street set behind a well-maintained garden so is in a prominent location on the main road heading up to the hospital.

There are no significant 'planning issues' associated with the application. No trees or landscaping are affected. As the building footprint is not being increased, there can be no impact on archaeology. A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was commissioned by the previous owners in 2023. This advised that there was 'negligible potential for bats' in the property and that there was no need for further survey work. As nothing has changed since then concerning the roof, we can see no need to re-visit the PRA.

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February 2026