

Planning Officer's Report - LDCA January 2020

APPLICATION	2019/95 – Proposed two bedroom dwelling
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Permission in Full
REGISTERED	23 October 2019
APPLICANT	Melanie Richards
PARCEL	BG0337
SIZE	0.25 acres
LOCALITY	Barren Ground
LAND OWNER	Melanie Richards
ZONE	Intermediate Zone
CONSERVATION AREA	None
CURRENT USE	Vacant
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Independent Newspaper on 25 October 2019▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	8 November 2019
REPRESENTATIONS	None Received
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO
PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS	None
SITE VISIT	21 st October 2019

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

a) Water Division	No Objection
b) Sewage Division	No Objection
c) Energy Division	No Objection
d) St Helena Fire & Rescue	No Response
e) St Helena Roads Section	No Objection
f) Heritage	No Response
g) Environmental Management	No Response

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Authorised by: I Mohammed (CPO)

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Application 2019/95

h) Public Health	No Response
i) Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
j) Property Division (Crown Est)	No Response
k) St Helena Police Service	Not Consulted
l) Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Consulted
m) Enterprise St Helena (ESH)	No Objection
n) National Trust	No Response

B. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS SUMMARY

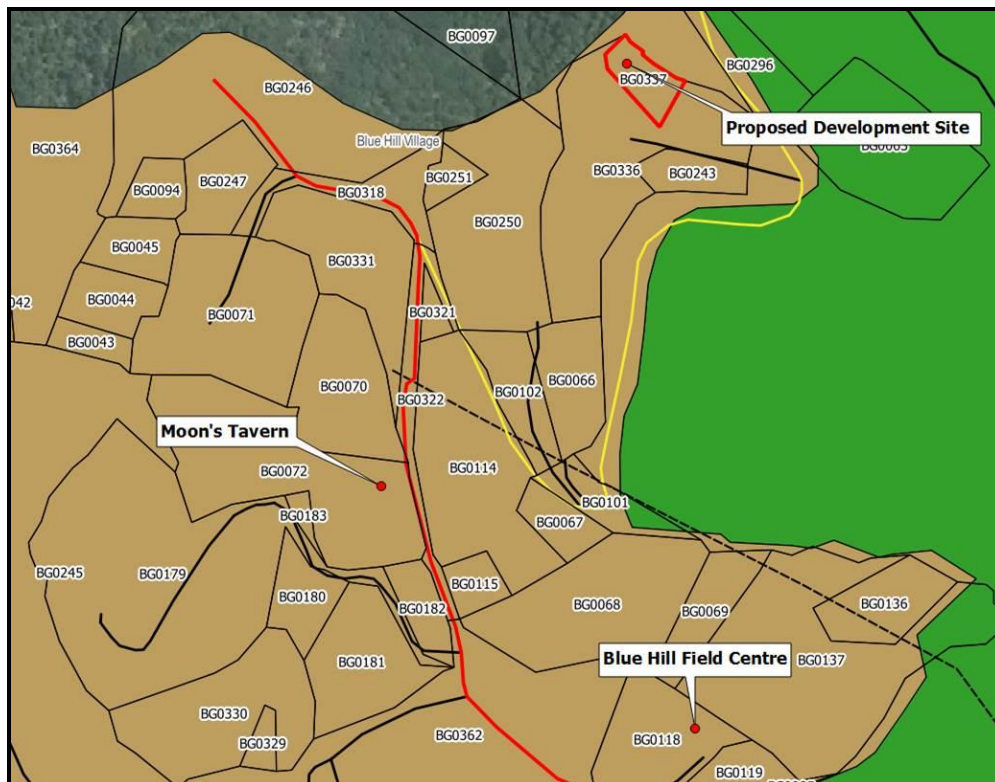
The proposed development is for a single storey new build with two bedrooms, two bath, with an open plan kitchen, dining and lounge, and a covered patio area. The floor area of the proposed is 185.3m² and the site measures 1056m² which gives an 18% coverage.

It is also proposed to excavate an access road through the adjoining property (land parcel no. BG0336). Soil spill from the proposed site excavation will also be placed on the adjacent property.

C. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

Location: The proposed development site is located within the **Intermediate Zone** where relevant IZ1 policies apply such as serviceability and impact on neighbouring amenity. There are no Conservation Area restrictions.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



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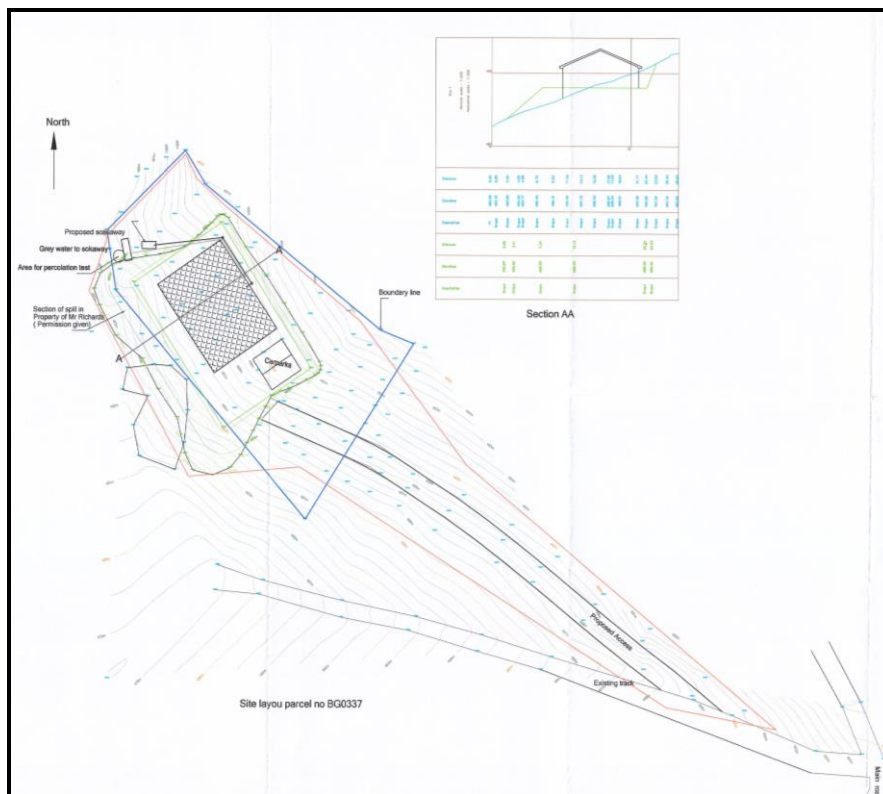
Site: The site is owned by the applicant and is approximately 0.25 of an acre (1056m²). The site sits on a fairly steep hill side (approx. 23°) which is not always practical for a bungalow design house due to the one level floor design requiring a large excavated flat area and subsequent high embankment. However, the applicant proposes to excavate the site to allow 70% of the house to be on the flat excavated platform and 30% on the existing sloped land to the front. The excavated area allows for two car parking spaces.

Permission have been granted by the owner of the adjacent property, of land parcel no. BG0336, to allow the excavated soil spill to form an embankment on his land. The spill is to be engineered to ensure a secured base and then compacted at 500mm intervals, these details will be submitted with the building regulation application and monitored by the building inspector.

The embankment at the rear of the house is proposed to be excavated at 60° and measuring 3200mm in height, thus around the general limit of 3 metres as stated in the LDCP policy IZ 1. F) *“the design and layout do not generally entail excavation nor making up of levels to a depth or height in excess of 3m.”*

Permission has also been granted by the owner of the adjacent property to allow the proposed access road to be excavated through his property. The proposed road will be a spur of the existing track leading to the dwelling on parcel no. 336.

Diagram 2: Site Plan & Section Thro’



Existing: The land is currently used for animal shelter (goats & chickens).

Proposed: The proposed development is a two bed, two bath bungalow with an open plan kitchen, dining and lounge and an L-shape covered patio area.

The main structure consist of traditional sand and cement rendered concrete blockwork (150 & 115mm) on an approved concrete floor. The roof is inverted box ribbed metal sheeting. Windows and doors are all white Upvc.

Due to 30% of the building been constructed on the existing sloped land, a proposed engineered design foundation with supporting walls will need to be submitted with the building regulation application.

A design will also be required with the building regulation application for the support to the high gable walls as a result of the 25° roof pitch.

The proposed access road will create an embankment on the upper side and land infill on the lower side, the safe slope of the embankment and safe placement of the soil spill will be monitored and approved by the building inspector. It is proposed to surface the road with a permeable material.

A septic tank and soakaway is proposed within the boundary of the proposed development. A successful percolation test was carried out and the final design of the septic tank and soakaway will be submitted and approved with the building regulation application.

Diagram 3: Plan

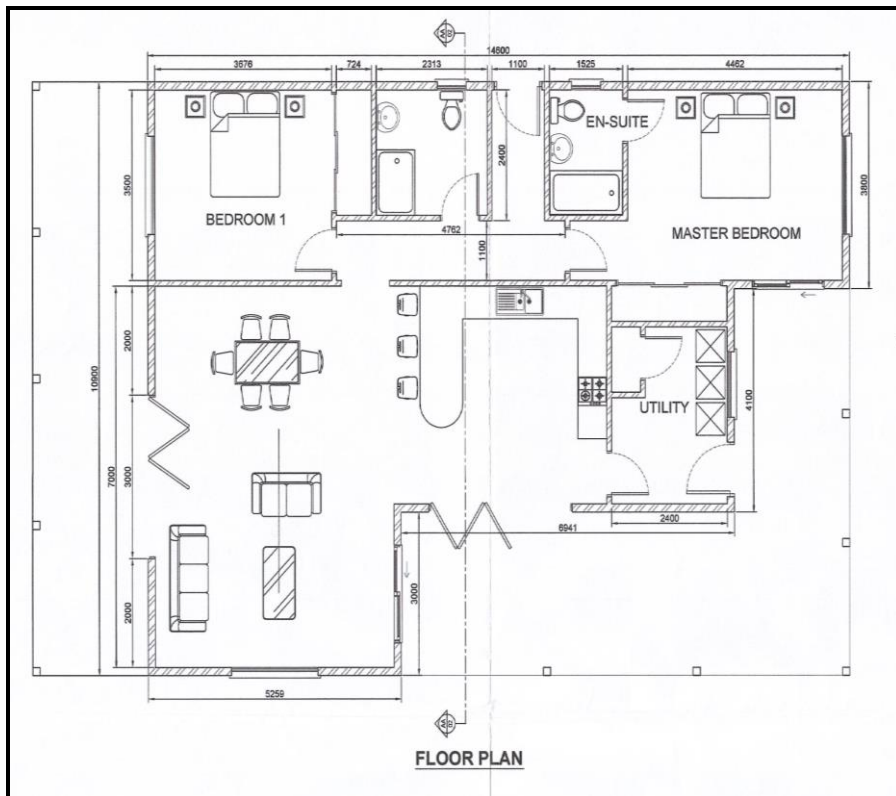


Diagram 4: Elevation 1



Diagram 5 Elevation 2



Diagram 6: Elevation 3



Diagram 7: Elevation 4



REPRESENTATIONS

No representations were received from any statutory body or members of the public, including immediate neighbours.

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The relevant policies of the Land Development Control Plan (LDCP 2012 - 2022) that are applicable in the assessment of the proposed development are set out below:

- Intermediate Zone: Policies IZ1 (a, b, f, g and h)
- Water: Policy W2
- Sewage, storm and Drainage: Policies SD1 (b, c), SD3, SD.4 and SD7
- Road and Transport Policies: RT1 (c and d), RT3 and RT7

OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT

This proposed development, like with the majority of developments on the island, is on steep hillside land which creates issues with high embankments when excavated to accommodate bungalow designed houses on a solid level platform. For example, damp issues around and within the building due to the close proximity to an embankment that is higher than the eaves of the house restricting the building from breathing and expelling moisture. There are also continuous soil erosion from the embankment if not adequately retained, thus having an impact on the building. It also creates an enormous cost to the applicant for the initial excavation and subsequent retention of embankments.

A design that makes best use of the natural hillside slope can create beautiful surroundings, improve the view and provide the development with character that fits into the landscape. While the proposed development allows for some part of the building to be constructed through the makeup soil and into the sloped land thus restricting the height of the embankment to 3200mm, it is the planning officer's view

that a design to suit the land would have been an optimum choice. These design improvements were brought to the attention of the agent by the planning office with view to reconsidering the design and layout. However, the applicant was resolute that a bungalow design house was the preferred development choice.

During the pre-application discussions with the agent it was also brought to their attention that the orientation of the proposed house on the site plan didn't aligned with the contours and topography of the site and thus created an extremely high embankment on one side of the site. The agent redesigned the site plan to comply with the recommendation.

Overall the design is a simple, single storey bungalow with a dual pitched roof that creates an appearance similar to those of neighbouring properties in terms of siting, scale, proportion, details and external materials thus complying with the housing policy H.9 and IZ1(a) and therefore can be supported.