

Planning Officer's Report – LDCA AUGUST 2021

APPLICATION	2021/52 – Construction of a 3 Bedroom Split Level Dwelling
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Permission in Full
REGISTERED	29 th June 2021
APPLICANT	Theo & Sone Meij
PARCEL	SCOT0638 & SCOT0649
SIZE	0.23 & 0.15 acres (954 & 634m ²)
LOCALITY	Upper Cleughs Plain (Scotland Registration Section)
ZONE	Intermediate
CONSERVATION AREA	None
CURRENT USE	Vacant Crown Land
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sentinel Newspaper on 1st July 2021▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	15 th July 2021
REPRESENTATIONS	One received from neighbour
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division	No Objection
2. Energy Division	No Objection (Comment)
3. Fire & Rescue	No Response
4. Roads Section	No Objection (Comment)
5. Property Division	No Response
6. Environmental Management	No Response
7. Public Health	No Response
8. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
9. St Helena Police Services	Not Consulted
10. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Consulted
11. Sustainable Development	No Response

12. National Trust	No Response
13. Sure SA Ltd	No Objection
14. Heritage Society	No Response

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

The application development site (area: 1.588 sq/mtrs) is situated on vacant crown land south of all existing houses in upper Cleughs Plain. The applicant has the option to purchase the land as freehold subject to planning approval. The plot is designated within the Intermediate Zone and not within any proposed conservation area, however it sits approximately five meters north of the Green Heartland Zone.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



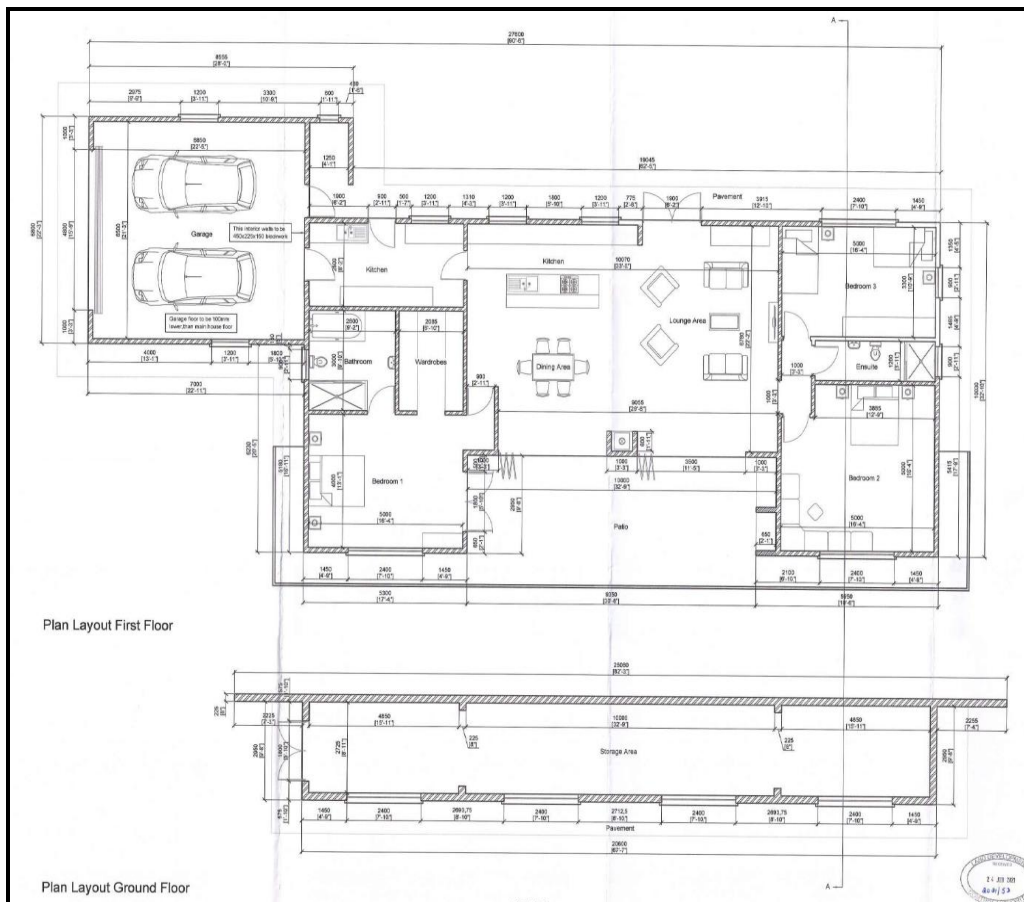
THE PROPOSAL

The site sits at the end of an access track through the forest from the road junction near Scotland offices. Upon reviewing the plans submitted in the original application, the planning officer advised the applicant that both the proposed building design layout and proposed access did not make best use of the land, but created unnecessary excavated scaring and unnecessary land spill to support. It was suggested to the applicant to invert the house layout, which would allow access directly onto the site from the existing track following the natural contour of the land. This would provide access directly into the proposed double garage. (See diagrams 2 & 3: original plans).

Diagram 2: Site Plan (Superseded)



Diagram 3: Building Plan (Superseded)



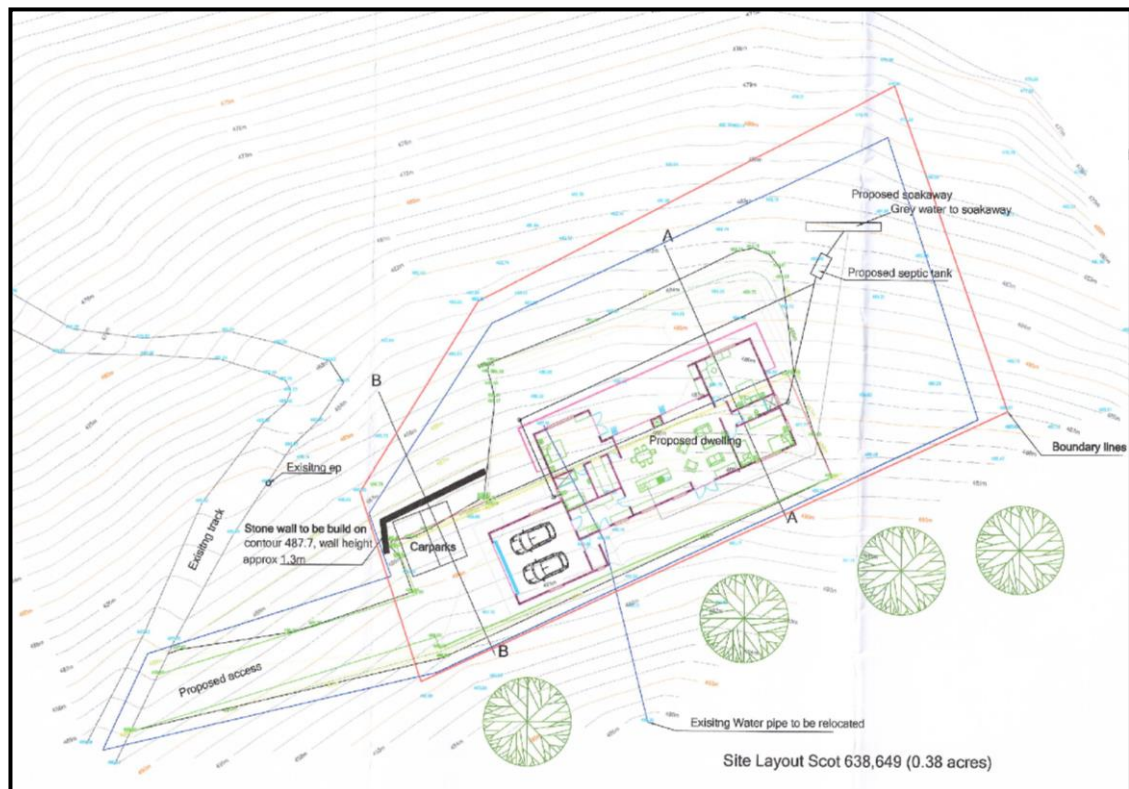
The plans were revised to conform to the suggestions made by the Planning Office. (see diagrams 4 & 8: revised plans)

With the development site being in close proximity to the Green Heartland, the applicant proposes to be as green and off the grid as possible blending the property away in the forest and replacing invasive species with indigenous trees and scrubs, trying to keep as many of the existing larger trees; this along with the positioning of the property will provide the maximum amount of privacy both to the applicant and the neighbours.

Water harvesting with the view to reuse is proposed via storage tanks concealed within the ground floor structure.

An individual sewer/septic system is proposed with a septic tank (1700mm x 1200mm) and a drainage trench (8000mm x 1800mm as a result of a percolation test) within the development property boundary.

Diagram 4: Site Plan (Revised)



Traditional site excavation is proposed on the section of land that is naturally sloped at approximately 20 degrees. The excavation will form a split level and create an embankment at the rear of the house measuring approximately 2900mm in height at its highest point, thus complying with 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.”*

The soil spill placement on the site as a result of the excavation will be placed to the north and east of the excavated area and within the development boundary.

Diagram 5: Site Cross Section A-A

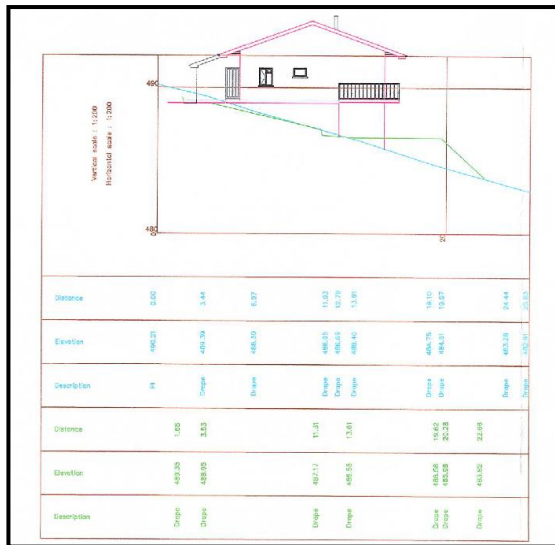


Diagram 6: Site Cross Section B-B

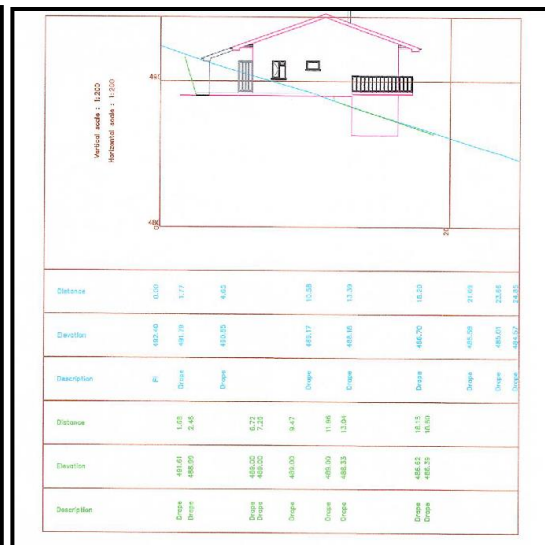


Diagram 7: Ground Floor Layout

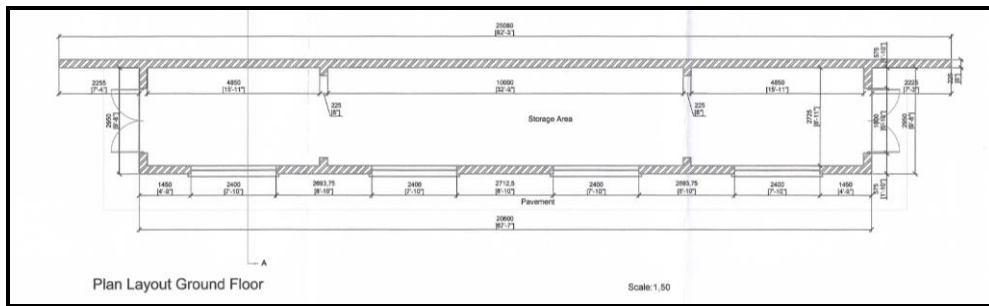


Diagram 8: First Floor Layout

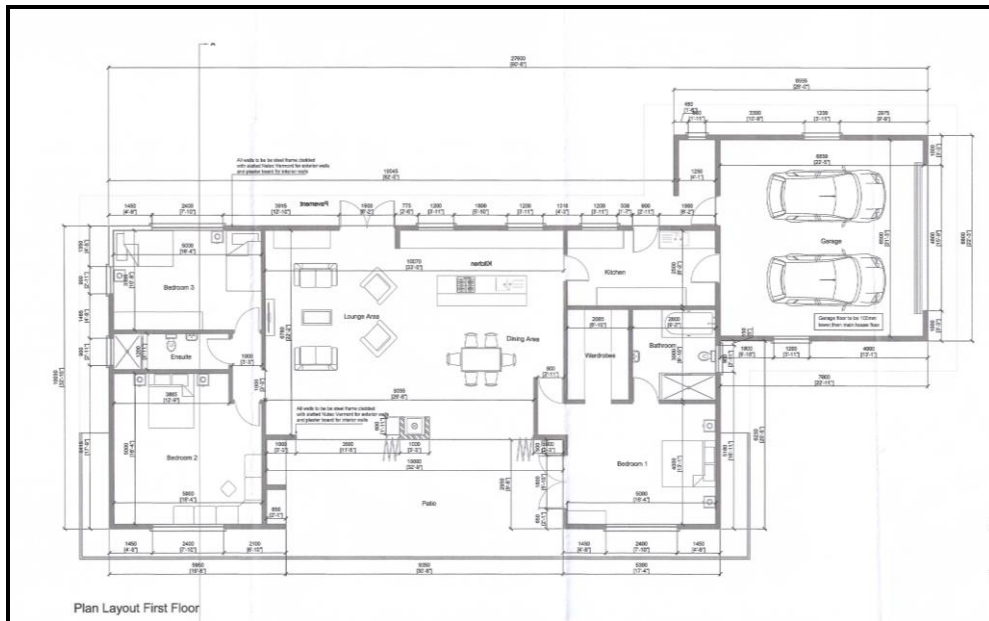


Diagram 9: Elevations



REPRESENTATIONS

Comments were received from stakeholders and neighbour, which consisted of the following:

Roads Section – *‘Applicant is to be fully responsible for any storm water flowing from the existing property and should bear the cost of installing drains as appropriate. Conditions should also require the applicant to be fully responsible for managing any storm water that falls on the development site. Storm water shall not be discharged onto the public highway or to be a nuisance to property owners below them.*

Connect St Helena Ltd Energy Division – *“No Objection” ‘Providing no excavations within 5m of any HV overhead line, pole or stay anchor, and 3m within any LV line, pole or stay anchor. Application required for electricity.*

Neighbour – *“No Objection”, however concerns were made regarding:*

- *The new development overlooking the neighbour’s property.*
- *The discharge of sewage, grey and rain water not running onto the neighbour’s property.*
- *Electrical cables to the new development not running over/across neighbour’s property.*

Officers Response:

The new development is set back to the south boundary and therefore will not directly overlook the neighbour’s property.

The management of rain/storm water will be address in the conditions to protect public and private amenity and accord with LDCP SD1.

The position of the proposed septic tank and soakaway on the north east corner of the development boundary will not affect the neighbouring property.

Connection to electrical supply and method of installation are the responsibility of the applicant to sort the relevant permissions.

POLICY CONSIDERATION

The proposed development is assessed against the LDCP Policies set out below:

- Intermediate Zone: Policies IZ1 (a, b, f, g and h)
- Housing: Policy H9
- 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

The revised design of this development application was as a result of discussions between the Planning Department and the applicant. As was presented in this report, the redesign features makes best use of the land, avoiding unnecessary excavation and subsequent scarring of the hill side. It cuts out unsightly embankments that would form both sides of the proposed access. It also reduce cost to the applicant by having a shorter access onto the property that follows the natural contour of the land and by eliminating the need for retaining the proposed drive way.

While excavation into the landscape is not encouraged, the embankment in this case as a result of the split level design does not exceed a height of 2.9 metres, thus complying with 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."*

Overall the development complies with the housing policy H.9 and IZ1(a) and creates an appearance that is acceptable in terms of:

Siting: the split-level building design and footprint fits with the topography of the land, not creating extreme embankments. Its design appearance with its dual pitch roof forms a coherence with surrounding properties. The design and finishing's shows the applicant's intent to build a property with the least impact on the land and surrounding trees, respecting the neighbour's privacy.

Orientation: the building's north facing position forms a coherence with the orientation of surrounding properties and makes best use of the spectacular views.

Scale and Massing: although being a two story split-level dwelling, its physical attributes such as height, shape and bulk does not overly dominate or compromise the area due to the hillside backdrop and dense tree population.

Materials and Detailing: traditional durable build materials with stone cladding of the ground floor and the clad steel frame first floor are acceptable both in relation to other properties and the forest setting.