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NEW DWELLING, SEA MILL LANE

January 2023

22030 Design and Access Statement

Architects
PLUS

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1 | INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application for the development of a new Dwelling, Sea Mill Lane, St. Bees.

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 sets out detailed requirements for the contents of Design and Access Statements. Further advice is provided in Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation (2010) published by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as well as, in 'Design and Access Statements' as published by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). As such, one statement is required to cover both design and access, allowing applicants to demonstrate an integrated approach delivering inclusive design, responsive to context alongside addressing accessibility for intended user throughout the design process.

This Statement will provide an overview of the research and analysis which underpins the design of the proposed dwelling.



Site Facing North



South Facing south

2 | CONTEXT

2.1 LOCALITY

CONTEXT

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Location

Site Address: Site is located adjacent to Stoney Croft at the southern end of Sea Mill Lane, St. Bees., CA27 0BD

Grid Reference: NX 97042 10695

X (Easting) 297042 , Y (Northing) 510695

What3words: showcase.steady.outlines

The site area: 0.635 Ha

Locality

St. Bees is an historic village approximately 5 miles south of Whitehaven and 7 miles from the Lake District National Park. It is a popular destination for visitors for its coastal headland and beaches. It is popular for boating, swimming, fishing; and for birdwatching.

The village is well served by public transport with a train station and regular bus routes from Whitehaven, Egremont, Ravenglass and Millom; and is located on two national walking paths (English Coastal Path and Coast to Coast Path), National Cycle paths (Hadrian's Cycleway, extension to C2C cycle route and National routes 71/72) as well as local recreational and heritage trails. The village offers a mix of accommodation and facilities for visitors.

It is also a popular place to live and is well served by schools, public facilities and employment opportunities (most notably Sellafield to the south).

There are two main routes through the village to the beach. Beach Road leads to the larger seafront which is well served with parking, visitor facilities and residential accommodation. The second is Sea Mill Lane which is smaller and serves predominantly residential dwellings.

The site is located at the end of Sea Mill Lane, and is surrounded by residential dwellings to the north and west; with opening farmland to the east; and coastal views to the South and West.



Arial View of the Site



Site Plan

2.2 SITE PHOTOS

CONTEXT

Site Description

The site is a steeply sloping site facing west forwards the sea and forms part of the curtilage to Stoney Croft. There is a public footpath to the western boundary running between the site and the railway line which continues south after the site. There is a stone retaining wall of approximately 1m high between the public footpath and the site.

Sea Mill Lane runs south from St. Bees towards the beach and is dotted with dwellings generally on the west side of the road until it meets the railway line. There are three dwelling on the Eastern side of the lane before it reaches the site, Strandby House, Marsh House and Stoney Croft. To the East of the site the ground level continues to rise and is open agricultural land.

There are several small single storey dwellings to the west of the railway line on the edge of the beach.



View towards the public footpath



View towards the Sea



View of Sea Mill Lane from the Beach

2.3 NEIGHBOURING DWELLINGS

CONTEXT

Neighbouring Dwellings

The three dwellings adjoining the site vary in style. All three are build into the sloping site and face west towards the sea.

Strandby House

Constructed in 2005. (planning reference 4/04/2275). It is a three storey dwelling consisting of a garage and workshop on the ground floor and two floors of accommodation. Constructed with local natural stone or roughcast rendered walls with natural stone quoins and window surrounds. The windows and doors are UPVC and has a natural slate roof covering. The dwelling steps up the sloping site with a large stone retaining wall to the rear and smaller stone retaining walls to the side patio and front elevations.

Marsh House

Age unknown. Mash House is a two storey dwelling with roughcast rendered walls, UPVC windows and doors; and concrete roof tiles. The Dwelling appears to have had a number of extensions to the side and rear of the property. The last know extension was in 1990 when the flat roofs were replaced with pitched roofs and a new first floor bedroom added.)Planning reference 4/90/0237).

Stoney Croft

Age Unknown. Stoney Croft is a two storey dwelling adjacent to the site. It is constructed with rendered walls, concrete roof tiles and UPVC windows and doors. There is also a flat roof extension to the side of the dwelling with rendered retaining walls to the front and rear of the property.

Other Dwellings

To the west of the railway there are a number of single storey beach bungalows. The dates of the bungalows are unknown but there are planning approvals noted for Ronelle in 1988 and a replacement dwelling The Haven in 2007.



2.4 ECOLOGY (IF REQUIRED)
CONTEXT

Ecology

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken by Envirotech on 07/11/2022.

The site comprises a steep bluff covered in dense scrub. There is open grassland to the South. The site is enclosed by a railway and footpath to the West and improved grassland to the East and South. The bluff continues to the North.

The nearest statutory protected site is St Bees Head SSSI. This is isolated from the site by a railway and railway cutting. The biological interest of the site is represented in a number of different ‘habitats’: natural cliff-top grassland and heath, sheer cliff face and cliff-fall rubble, shingle and wave-cut platform. The outstanding interest of this area lies, however, in the sheer cliffs which provide the only breeding site on the coast of Cumbria for a variety of colonial seabirds.

Below is are excerpts from the report assessing the ecological value of the sites:

‘The entire development area comprises dense scrub. This is dominated by Bramble (Rubus fruticosus agg). Western gorse (Ulex gallii) is sub-dominant, becoming dominant towards the South. False oat grass (Arrhenatherum elatius) and Yorkshire Fog (Holcus lanatus) was occasional to the lower slope. Occasional cutting has been undertaken by the site owners resulting in the localized regrowth of grasses. Overall the bluff is species poor and dominated by only two species.’

‘The plant species assemblages recorded at the site are all common in the local area and are considered to be of low ecological value.’

‘There is no potential for bat roosting on site. Badgers are absent. The site has low value to reptiles. Birds may utilise scrub on site for nesting between March and September. The vegetation on site is not consistent with that found in the SSSI adjacent.’

‘No other notable or protected species were recorded on the site.’



View South-East from the Public Footpath



View North from the Public Footpath



View North-East of the Site



View of the Public Footpath South of the site.

Planning Considerations

The planning application is made in full with all details provided in order to ensure proper consideration can be given to the proposed new dwelling.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that any application for planning permission is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for Copeland consists of the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 and the saved policies of the Copeland 2001-2016.

The relevant policies are considered to be:

Copeland Local Plan 2013 – 2028 (Adopted December 2013) Core Strategy

Policy ST1 – Strategic Development Principles

Policy ST2 – Spatial Development Strategy

Policy SS1 – Improving the Housing Offer

Policy SS2 – Sustainable Housing Growth

Policy SS3 – Housing Needs, Mix and Affordability

Policy T1 – Improving Accessibility and Transport

Policy ENV1 – Flood Risk and Risk Management

Policy ENV3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy ENV5 – Protecting and Enhancing the Borough’s Landscapes Development Management Policies (DMP)

Policy DM10 – Achieving Quality of Place

Policy DM11 – Sustainable Development Standards

Policy DM12 – Standards of New Residential Developments

Policy DM22 – Accessible Developments

Policy DM24 – Development Proposal and Flood Risk

Policy DM25 – Protecting Nature Conservation Sites, Habitats and Species Policy DM26 – Landscaping

Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 (LP): Saved Policy TSP8 - Parking Requirements

Emerging Local Plan

The emerging Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035 has recently been the subject of a Publication Draft Consultation. The Publication Draft Consultation builds upon the previously completed Issues and Options and Preferred Options consultations. Given the stage of preparation of the Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035 some weight can be attached to policies within the Publication Draft where no objections have been received.

The following policies have some weight but this is considered to be extremely limited given that the policies are subject to objections still to be heard through the Examination process. There should be no inference drawn that these policies will not be altered and therefore whilst they are referred to for completeness, no weight should be attributed to such in the decision making process until confirmation that there are no objections to each policy has been provided.

Strategic Policy DS1PU: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development Strategic Policy DS2PU: Reducing the impacts of development on Climate Change Strategic Policy DS3PU: Settlement Hierarchy

Strategic Policy DS4PU: Settlement Boundaries

Strategic Policy DS5PU: Planning Obligations

Policy DS6PU: Design and Development Standards

Policy DS7PU: Hard and Soft Landscaping

Strategic Policy DS8PU: Reducing Flood Risk Policy DS9PU: Sustainable Drainage Strategic Policy H1PU: Improving the Housing Offer

Strategic Policy H2PU: Housing Requirement

Strategic Policy H3PU: Housing delivery

Strategic Policy H4PU: Distribution of Housing

Strategic Policy H5PU: Housing Allocations

Policy H6PU: New Housing Development

Policy H7PU: Housing Density and Mix Strategic

Policy H8PU: Affordable Housing

Strategic Policy N1PU: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity Strategic

Policy N2PU: Local Nature Recovery Networks

Strategic Policy N3PU: Biodiversity Net Gain

Strategic Policy N6PU: Landscape Protection

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Design Guide (NDG).

Cumbria Development Design Guide (CDG)

Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021 (SHMA)

Copeland Borough Council Housing Strategy 2018 – 2023 (CBCHS)

The Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit (CLGC)

Copeland Borough-Wide Housing Needs Survey (2020)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (CHSR).

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and forms the national policy for England. It is required that Local Plans are in broad compliance with the requirements of the NPPF in order to be considered up to date.

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF confirms that the purpose of planning is to ‘contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’. Sustainable development is defined as having three objectives which are mutually supportive. These are:

- Economic;
- Social; and
- Environmental.

Effective use of land is promoted in Paragraph 117 to ensure that the need for new homes is met and this is expanded upon on Paragraph 122 which indicates that decisions should take into account:

- A need for different types of housing;
- Local Market conditions and viability;
- The availability and capacity of infrastructure and services;
- The desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting; and
- The importance of well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Development is required to:

- Function well and add to the overall quality of the locality over the lifetime of the development;
- Be visually attractive through the use of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- Be sympathetic to local character although this does not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or changes;
- Create attractive, welcoming spaces to live through a sense of place; and
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development.

Principle of Development

Policies SS1, SS2 and SS3 seek to promote sustainable development to meet the needs and aspirations of the Boroughs housing market, as well as having consideration for the requirements of smaller settlements within the Borough, which respect their scale and function.

The site location is well related to other dwellings and St Bees is within reasonable walking distance. It is not considered that the site is isolated in relation to Policy 79 of the NPPF and therefore the site can be considered to be in a sustainable location.

Policy SS3 of the Local Plan requires housing development to demonstrate how proposals will deliver an appropriate mix of housing as set out in the SHMA. St Bees falls within the Whitehaven Housing Market Area (HMA) of Copeland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

The SMHA suggests a particular focus on the delivery of three bedroom houses, semidetached and detached houses with four or more bedrooms.

This application seeks permission for a large modern detached dwelling of a high quality specification providing housing contributing to the need for bespoke accommodation for higher earners within the District in order to maintain money with Copeland and reducing the leakage to the neighbouring Authority of Allerdale (acknowledging that Sellafield is in reasonable close proximity and provides a high proportion of higher paid employment opportunities). On this basis the proposed development is considered to help contribute towards a greater balance of market housing stock in St Bees, which meets the requirements of the SHMA in accordance with the provision of Policy SS3 of the Local Plan and Paragraph 61 of the NPPF.

Impact of Development on Residential Amenity

Within the Copeland Local Plan, Policies ST1, DM10, DM11, and DM12 of the Local Plan, and section 12 of the NPPF seek to secure high standards of design for new residential properties. These policies seek to create and maintain a reasonable standard of amenity, and set out detailed requirements with regard to standard of residential amenity, including the provision of parking spaces, separation distances and open space.

The overall layout of the proposed development meets the required separation distances set out in Policy DM12 with adjacent residential properties and is consistent with the general linear built form of the area.

Settlement Character, Landscape Impact and Visual Impact

This is covered throughout this Design and Access Statement. Policy ENV5 states that the Borough’s landscapes will be protected and enhanced by: protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that the development does not threaten or detract from the distinctive characteristics of that particular area; that where the benefits of the development outweigh the potential harm, ensuring that the impact of the development on the landscape is minimised through adequate mitigation, preferably on-site; and, supporting proposals which enhance the value of the Borough’s landscapes.

Policy DM10 seeks that development responds positively to the character of the site and the immediate and wider setting and enhances local distinctiveness including: an appropriate size and arrangement of development plots; the appropriate provision, orientation, proportion, scale and massing of buildings; and, careful attention to the design of spaces between buildings.

The application site comprises of undeveloped land that lies on the edge of St Bees, adjacent to a number of existing dwellings. The Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit (CLCGT) identifies the site as being within Sub Type 4 ‘Coastal Sandstone’. The Key Characteristics of the land comprise: coastal sandstone cliffs, sandstone rolling hills and plateaus, large open fields, prominent hedge banks bound pastoral fields, small woodland blocks along valley sides, and exposed coastal edge moving to intimate and enclosed farmland inland.

The Guidelines for development include reducing the impact of any new buildings through careful siting and design.

The site comprises an area of scrub land located to the south of St Bees adjacent to a number of existing residential dwellings. This area of St Bees is characterised by detached dwellings fronting onto the sea front. The proposed development would comprise an extension of the existing developed form of the settlement in this location, it would reflect the existing character of the area and would extend the linear form of the lane. The development would be considered a small edge of settlement extension. The development can be considered to round off this part of the settlement. The application is supported by sectional drawings which show that the development would sit within the context of the existing settlement and would be viewed against the backdrop of these existing properties, therefore the impacts are considered to be lessened. It would provide an improved ‘book end’ to the dwellings in this location.

The development is therefore not considered to result in major intrusion into the open countryside and landscape features consequently. The development is not considered to have significant harm on the overall landscape.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies ST1, ENV5 and DM26 of the Copeland Local Plan and provisions of the NPPF.

CONTEXT

Flood Risk and the Achievement of Satisfactory Drainage

Policy ST1B(ii) and paragraph 163 of the NPPF seek to focus development on sites that are at least risk of flooding and where development in flood risk is unavoidable, ensure that the risk is minimised or mitigated through appropriate design. Policy ENV1 and DM24 of the Copeland Local Plan reinforces the focus of protecting development against flood risk.

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1. A preliminary drainage scheme is provided to demonstrate that the site can be adequately drained.

Access & Highway Safety

Policy DM22 of the Copeland Local Plan requires developments to be accessible to all users and to meet adopted car parking standards, which reflect the needs of the Borough in its rural context.

The development will be accessed via the existing Seamill Lane and will provide appropriate visibility splays. It is considered that the development of one additional dwelling would not result in a severe impact on the highway network and would be in accordance with the aims and objectives of both the adopted Copeland Local Plan and the NPPF.

Ecology

Policies ST1, ENV3, and DM25 seek to ensure that new development will protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity. A Preliminary Ecological Survey has been submitted in support of this planning application which provides an assessment of the ecological impacts of the development. There is no indication that the site cannot be adequately developed and ecology appropriately protected.

Whilst the development by virtue of its location would have some impacts on the existing character on Seamill Lane and St Bees, the small scale proposal has been designed to respect the character and built form of this area of the settlement. The development is considered an extension to the settlement, rounding off this southern part of the village, and would be viewed against the existing built form of St Bees and the dwellings which are immediately adjacent, limiting its impacts.

It is considered that the relevant Planning Policies have been fully considered through the design process.



Arial View of St .Bees.

Image © 2023 TerraMetrics

Planning Consultations

A Pre-application was submitted on 30/08/2022 and a response was received from Christie Burns on 07/09/2022.

The consultation response raised concerns over the St. Bees settlement boundary which we have address in section 2.6 Planning Considerations. Further concerns were raised on the elevated location and scale of the development. These concerns have been addressed in section 3.1 Concept and 3.2 Site Plan and Site Elevations.

Neighbours Consultation

The applicant is the current owner of Stoney Croft and has consulted their neighbours regarding the proposed development.



View of Stoney Croft and neighbouring dwellings

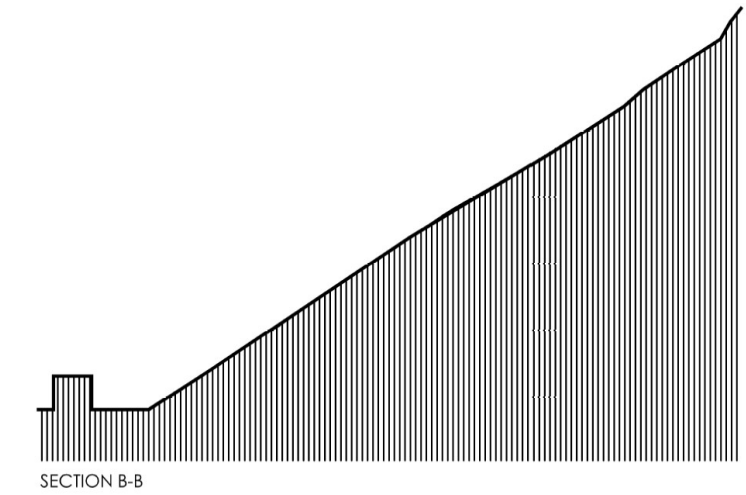
3 | DESIGN

3.1 CONCEPT DESIGN

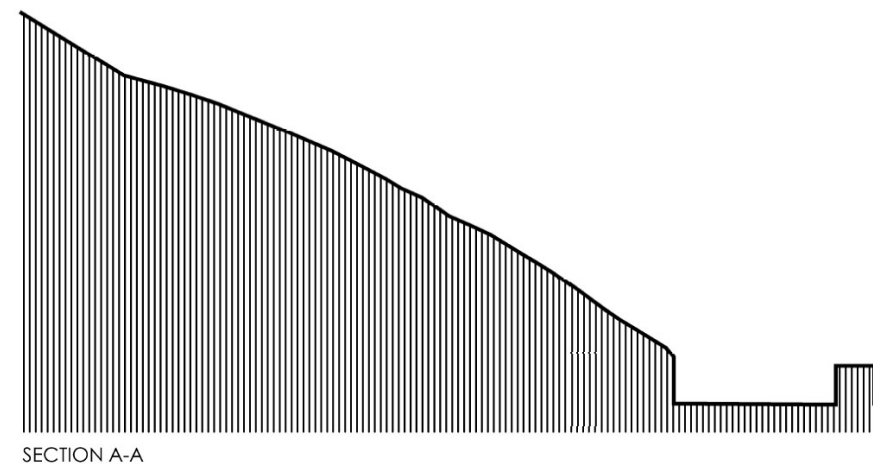
16

Design Principles

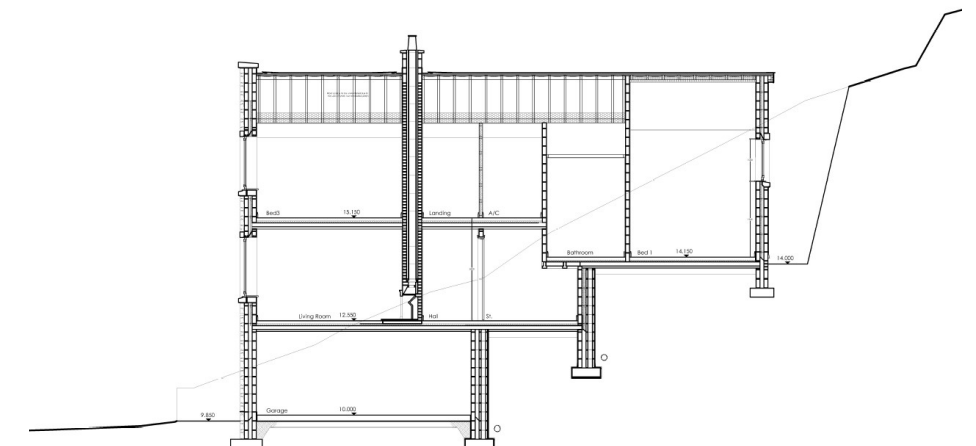
- Layout should maximise the views west towards the sea
- Layout should maximise natural lighting
- Layout should work with the topography of the site
- The scale and massing of the dwelling should not dominate other dwellings
- The materials and character of the dwelling should be in keeping with neighbouring dwellings
- There should be a clear delineation of the site boundary
- Privacy should be maintained in the dwelling from the public footpath
- Parking should be clearly defined and off the access road.



Section B-B



Section A-A



Section through Strandby House

3.2 SITE LAYOUT AND SECTION
DESIGN

Detailed Design Consideration

- The new dwelling should bookend the row of four houses
- The new dwelling should step up the site using natural stone retaining walls to match other dwellings
- The new dwelling should be a similar elevation to Strandby House
- The materials should match the character of the locality
- The spaces between the buildings should be of a similar character
- The lower level should contain parking and storage spaces
- The use of a stone plinth sits the building on the site and is inkeeping with the other dwellings
- There is sufficient parking and manoeuvring space for vehicles to the new dwelling and Stoney Croft



Proposed Section through Sea Mill Lane.

3.3 BUILDING DESIGN AND MATERIALS

DESIGN

Design Principles

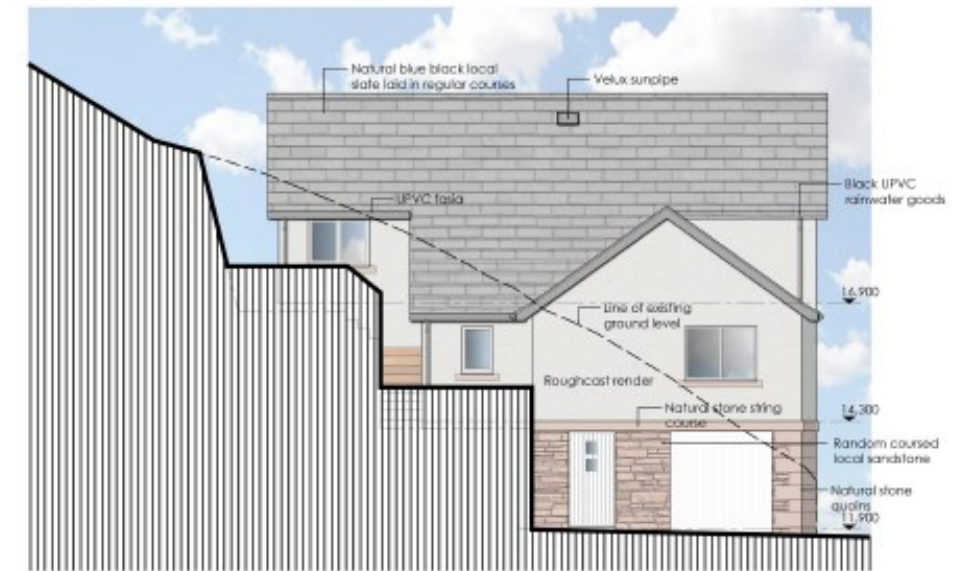
- Layout should maximise the views west towards the sea for the principle rooms and south/west aspect for living/dining room and patio
- Secondary spaces to be located at the rear of the building with no natural light
- The floors should step up the slope with garage/store on lower level, living/dining rooms on the intermediate level with access to outside and bedrooms on the upper level
- The materials used will express the strata of the dwelling
- The dwelling should maximise natural light and ventilations and be suitable for sustainable construction and the use of renewables
- The large glazing to the kitchen and bed 2 shall be stepped back to allow shading from the roof and balcony projections
- Patios to be on upper levels to provide some privacy from the public foot-path

Materials

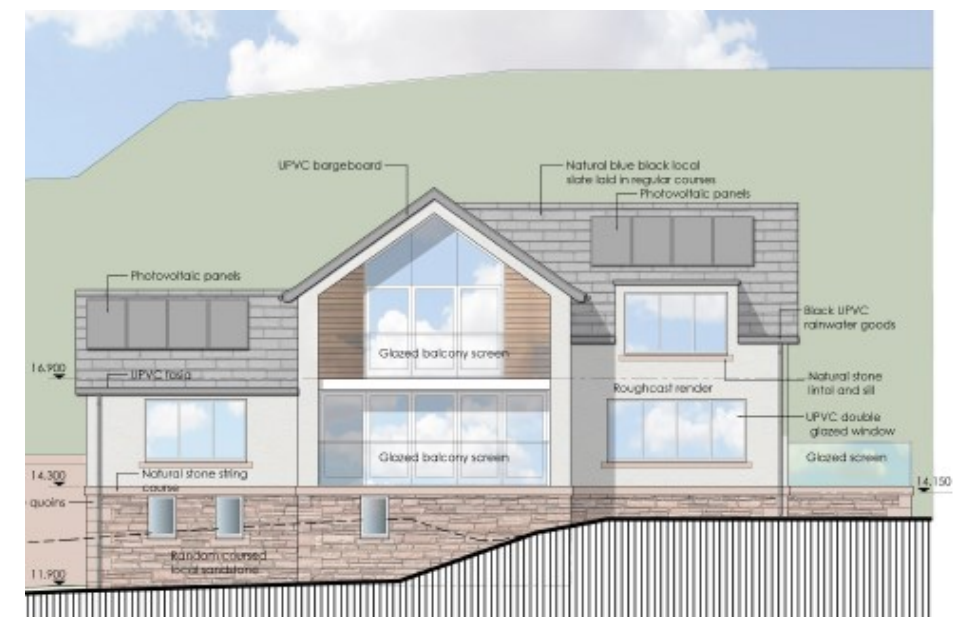
- Walls: Random coursed local natural sandstone and through colour rough-cast render with natural local stone string course. Horizontal Cedral weath-erboarding to balcony wall
- Roof: Random width blue/black natural slate laid in regular courses
- Windows: UPVC flush windows with chamfered corners and natural local stone sills
- Roof Windows: Velux rooflights and sunpipes with EDN flashings
- Bargeboards and Fasia's: Black/Dark Grey UPVC
- Rainwater Goods: Black UPVC downpipes and deepflow gutters
- Balcony and patio handrail: Glass with stainless steel supports.
- Boundary and retaining walls: Faced with Random coursed local natural sandstone and stock proof fencing to top field boundary
- External Surfaces: Tarmac to access road and parking areas. Stone flags to patios.



Plans
4/3 Bed House
House floor area: 223m²
Garage floor area: 53m²



North Elevation



West Elevation

Access Consideration

Vehicular access to the site is via Sea Mill Lane and shares an access with Stoney Croft. The existing parking spaces for Stoney Croft with sufficient space for manoeuvring. The proposed dwelling has garaging for two cars on the lower level with two external parking spaces for visitors.

Due to the steep site it is not possible to achieve level access ground floor accommodation,

(Caption)