

## Planning Statement Appellant Comments

### General

The proposed development site was separated from the garden of Islay House (formerly Cairnvaan) in 2007, well before the house was marketed and sold in 2009. We wanted to keep the plot to build a dwelling for ourselves and to support us and our children returning to Oban, so sought advice from the Planning Department regarding suitability in 2007 and before taking any steps. Following a site visit they said the site was suitable for a modest dwelling, and nothing material has changed in that location since then, except for road improvements carried out for planning application 14/00409/PP, which could have only had a positive impact.

If the site was “contrived” or “manufactured” for development in 2007, as per comments, then this was only because we received encouragement from the planning department. Islay House is very elevated from the road whereas the plot is situated at road-level. Although the site previously formed part of the garden at Islay House, intuitively it has always been a separate entity and naturally lent itself for the development of a separate dwelling because of this. According to the EHS, there was a dwelling on the site previously, highlighting its prime suitability.

## Site Location & Plot Size



*Image taken from Google Maps*

The aerial image above shows the cluster/line of houses ranging from Pinecrest through to Burnside Cottage, in the midst of which the proposal site (outlined in white) is located. The letter of encouragement we received in 2007 states that the proposed dwelling should relate to the dwelling on the opposite side of the road (Burnside).

The photograph also shows plot size relative to existing neighbouring plots demonstrating that they are in fact broadly similar. The red rectangle is intended to be an indicative representation of the intended location of the proposed dwelling, showing it will not be imposing, unsightly or of a cramped appearance when compared to neighbouring plots as has been suggested.

### **Vegetation**

We intend to clear the site and cut back the hedges and have already started which will improve light while maintaining privacy and we will be on site to complete this as soon as weather conditions permit.

### **Positive Pre-Application Advice**

Our decision to separate and retain the plot was expressly based upon the comments of the planning officers in 2007. Because they worked within the planning department, and thus part of their role is to support would-be developers, this should have constituted a guarantee that planning approval would be granted as long as we complied with all requirements when applying. We have an official letter giving positive affirmation. It which makes no mention of this being merely an opinion, in fact the officer says that the site *is considered suitable* which does not in any way sound as if it could be anything less than approval.

Our proposal falls within the settlement zone and is broadly supported by the LDP and LDP2. It makes sense of a piece of land which is overgrown and unsightly. The only issues raised against it seem to relate to matters of interpretation which directly contradict the support we received from the same planning department in 2007 and upon which we have based all of our decisions. The advice of of planning officers should carry enormous of weight if the system is to be trusted.

### **Buffer**

There is no precedent for there being a buffer between houses and the road in this neighbourhood. Almost all of the existing dwellings sit in close proximity to the road and there are no existing buffers. If this is being put forward as a consideration now, why wasn't this mentioned when the planning department sanctioned development y in 2007?