

## **Response To Neighbour Comments**

### **General**

For the purposes of the planning application and appeal processes, we fully understand that the comments made by Mr Gage are irrelevant. However, Mr and Mrs Gage bought Islay House (formerly Cairnvaan) with the express understanding that the land had been separated because we wanted to develop and dwell on it ourselves. Hence our rejection of their repeated attempts to purchase and develop the land for themselves which they even offered to rent from us from the outset which we rejected following legal advice from local solicitors. Although irrelevant, Mr and Mrs Gages' comments would contradict their own desires to develop the plot. In any case, despite irrelevance, we still feel it is important to answer his comments to set matters straight.

### **Size of Plot**

The plot is comparable in size to many neighbouring plots including Dunard, Pinecrest and Burnside when using the area calculation tool in the planning section of the Argyll & Bute Council website. In addition, many of the neighbouring houses are set very close to the road, such that size is generally not evident for most of the existing plots – including for Burnside, Burnside Cottage, Oakholm, Dunard and Pinecrest.

Oban planning department viewed the land as it is and deemed it suitable for development without modification. However, if they say that it is necessary, we will cut into the hillside sympathetically to widen the site, ensuring that this will be carried out professionally and will pose no risk to Islay House.

Although our application is for outline permission only, in response to comments and queries from the planning department during the application process, we had an indicative plan drawn up professionally just to give an idea of layout. Little thought has been given to house design at this stage, as we know a detailed design will have to be submitted in the future. At that stage, we will ensure that the proposed dwelling size is in keeping with the plot size.

### **Vegetation Overgrowth**

Every time we visited the site over the years to cut back vegetation, we were impeded from carrying out the work by Mr Gage's vans, equipment, material and detritus relating to his joinery business. We have photographs showing these in situ over the years taken by ourselves and a local source which we would be glad to forward to you. Out of being neighbourly, we have refrained from approaching him or complaining.

### **Neighbour Support**

We have spoken to most of the neighbours who support our plans for development. This includes Mrs Gage, who at our visit on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 said that she was looking forward to being our neighbour.

### **Fly-Tipping/ Unauthorised Parking**

Numerous items have been left – we have already disposed of materials (which were half-burnt) and identical/similar to Mr Gage's fence. This site, which Mr Gage has said he wishes to keep as a place of natural beauty next to his house, has been violated by himself numerous times. He has already admitted some responsibility and removed some of the detritus. A local estate agent has been monitoring the land for us and noted/photographed his vehicles parked there continuously without permission over the years.

### **Light & Privacy**

Immediate neighbours are Islay House, Burnside and Oakholm.

- **Islay House** - Islay House is situated at a much higher level than the plot and is also protected from view by a high fence and therefore there are no issues regarding light/privacy.
- **Burnside** – Sits opposite the site and across the public road. The high hedge protects it from any issues regarding light or privacy. Reducing the height of the hedge will have a positive effect by increasing light.
- **Oakholm** – sits diagonally across the private road and is only partially visible from the plot due to strategic planting and being situated at a slightly lower level. The proposed dwelling on our site would sit towards the back of the plot and towards Islay House so it is unlikely that there would be any significant direct house-to-house sightline and therefore there are no issues.

### **Historic Use of Land/Greenfield Site**

The EHS have stated that there was an historical dwelling on the site and that they should be notified if any demolition materials are found during groundworks although we are not sure how this might influence the appeal decision, if at all.

### **Congestion/Access Issues**

During the application process we sought comments from the Roads Department, and they have raised no objections to the proposal subject to compliance with certain requirements.

### **Drainage Considerations**

The proposal is not within a flood risk area and has no history of flooding. We would comply with all requirements concerning drainage to ensure no adverse impact. The proposal plan only shows an indicative location/layout for drainage provision and a more detailed plan would have to be submitted.

### **Benefit to the Local Community**

Dr Casci had an offer to start working as a local dentist providing NHS services, but has had to put this on hold as acceptance of the position rests upon this development/accommodation. We can provide official evidence of this to show our commitment and long-term plans.