

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**REGARDING PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

**AT**

**LAND REAR OF 4/5 THE DROVEWAY, ST. MARGARET'S BAY.**

**ON BEHALF OF**

**K J MADGE WILL TRUST**

**BY**

**PETER COURT  
PETER COURT ASSOCIATES  
CLEVELAND  
CHART ROAD  
CHART SUTTON  
KENT  
ME17 3RB**

**October 2015**

## **Planning Statement. Land rear of 4/5 The Droveaway, St. Margaret's Bay.**

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Peter Court Associates (PCA) have been appointed by Fynmores Solicitors on behalf of its clients, the KJ Madge Will Trust, to advise on the re-development of this site at St. Margaret's Bay. Previously, a planning application reference DOV/13/01020) for the erection of four dwellings had been refused by the District Council for reasons relating to design and loss of privacy for adjacent properties. However, the Will Trust has now instructed PCA, together with EP Architects (EPA) to liaise with the District Council and submit revised proposals that will address the Council's previous concerns.

1.2 This Statement therefore explains the development proposals and addresses the key issues raised by the District Council about the possible impact of the proposal.

### **2.0 Site location and description**

2.1 The site lies within the built up area of St. Margaret's Bay. It comprises a gap in an otherwise developed frontage with an overgrown plot fronting onto The Droveaway, together with land at the rear, which contains a number of garages and parking spaces. These garages are served by a hard-surfaced access road which slopes downwards (in a northerly direction) away from The Droveaway.

2.2 The surrounding area comprises primarily residential development along with some commercial uses.

### **3.0 The previous application and subsequent liaison with the District Council**

3.1 As stated above, the previous planning application (DOV/13/01020) was refused on design grounds. Since PCA and EPA were appointed by the Will Trust, contact has been made with the Planning Officer that handled that

application (Ms. Sarah Platts) in order to find out more about the Council's reasons to refuse permission.

- 3.2 From that discussion and from consideration of the Case Officer's report, it was clear that the previous application had been refused on the grounds of: (i) poor frontage, including conflicting roof designs; (ii) poor relationship to neighbouring buildings; (iii) lack of justification of designs of the proposed development and (iv) poor siting of the dwellings with unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbours. In addition to all of this, a point was made about a lack of cross-sectional drawings. Finally, there was the matter of the impact of the loss of the garages on the site. Although the County Highways Department did not raise objections, the Case Officer was unhappy about the possible implications of this on the surrounding area.
- 3.3 Before submitting a revised scheme, further pre-application advice was sought from the District Council. The response, from Mrs. Elizabeth Welch, dated 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015, made it clear that the principle of residential development was acceptable, as the site lay within the settlement confines of St. Margaret's. With regard to the submitted draft proposals, Mrs. Welch sought clarification on the derivation of the design of the proposed dwellings and suggested improvements to provide a better frontage. She also gave more detailed comments on the design of the individual dwellings.
- 3.4 As for parking provision, Mrs Welch indicated that 1.5 spaces be provided per two bed house and one parking space per flat. She also advised that additional information would be required on the past or current use of the shops at 4-5 The Droveaway.
- 3.5 Finally, she said that if the garages were known to be bat roosting areas, then evidence on this would need to be submitted as part of any planning application. Following further email correspondence with Mrs Welch, revised drawings have been prepared to overcome all the concerns raised by her.

#### **4.0 The proposed development**

- 4.1 In the light of the advice received, the proposed development now comprises the demolition of the sixteen garages and the construction of a pair of semi-detached dwellings along with the conversion of the ground floors shops at 4-5 The Droveaway to a single flat. In addition to this, this building will have a two-storey extension on its south-western side to provide another dwelling.
- 4.2 This proposal is substantially different to that refused in 2014. The pair of semi-detached dwellings on the site of the garages are far less obtrusive in terms of their character and design than the three dwellings previously proposed, while the house fronting The Droveaway will be attached to the existing building, thus creating a small terrace, rather than being detached. The effect of this will be to integrate the dwelling with what is already there, rather than be something completely lacking in conformity. It will have profiled tiles to match the existing ones, while the walls will be brick and painted render, again to match what is already there. The shop frontages will be removed on the road elevation and replaced with white UPVC doors and windows to match the existing at first floor level.
- 4.3 The semi-detached dwellings will be much more conventional in appearance than those proposed in the previous application, and more in keeping with the surrounding dwellings. It can be seen from the area that there is a wide design and age of buildings using a mix of materials. There is no uniformity in appearance. Consequently the proposed scheme has been designed to sit within this area. The pair of dwellings have been repositioned at the request of the officer to provide deeper rear gardens; the dwellings will each have an integral carport with the second parking space provided on the southern row of parking bays. The pair will have brick elevations with tiled full hipped roof. The eastern hip has been extended to provide the roof over a new garage. This will be occupied by the owner of one of the existing dilapidated garages. On the southern part of the site, there will be five new parking spaces. These are allocated as follows: Plot 1- one space; Plot 2 – one space; proposed ground floor flat – one space. Two spaces remain unallocated. It is unknown where the occupier of the first floor flat parks, but one of these spaces could be provided for that purpose. These will be

landscaped in order to shield them from views from The Droveaway. There will also be a landscaped access between spaces two and three to maintain the pedestrian access into no. 2 Bay Hill Cottages. It is therefore contended that the earlier concerns about the visual impact of the proposal have now been overcome. Indeed, Mrs Welch's pre-application advice does confirm that she considers that there would be no loss of privacy to No. 2 Bay Hill Cottage.

4.4 The Council has also raised the question about the impact of the loss of garages and parking spaces by the proposed re-development. Information from the letting agents (Tersons Estate Agents) has revealed that, out of the thirteen spaces, only nine are currently in use. Of these, just six are used for the parking of cars, two are used for general storage, while one is used for a mixture of both. With regard to the addresses of the people who rent the garages for the parking of cars, only three live in St. Margaret's Bay. In these circumstances, it is contended that the loss of the garages will have minimal impact on the surrounding area in terms of on-street parking. Indeed, the County Highways Officer did not object when previously consulted on this matter

4.5 The shops on the ground floor of 4-5 The Droveaway have been marketed for over two and a half years by Tersons Estate Agents. During that time, there has been no genuine interest from anyone regarding the acquisition of those retail premises. The lack of interest in them therefore provides a clear indication that they can reasonably be converted to residential use, without detriment. Indeed, government policy is that local authorities should adopt a flexible approach in this respect, rather than look to retain land and buildings for which there is little or no demand. The conversion of these units will therefore enhance the area, since empty units provide a negative image.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

5.1 In light of the above information and assessment, it is submitted that the proposed-development can reasonably take place. It comprises the re-development of under-used land in a sustainable location and therefore fully

accords with government policy. In these circumstances, it is requested that planning permission be granted.