

P-15-076

RECEIVED BY THE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
28 SEP 2015

T.J. HIRON, M.R.I.C.S.
CHARTERED SURVEYOR

Clowdisley,
Golf Club Lane,
St. Mary's,
Isles of Scilly

Tel/Fax 01720422563
Email: terry.hiron@virgin.net

Your Ref:

Planning Officer,
Council of the Isles of Scilly.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Man of War, Strand, St Mary's

Proposed conversion of Shop into Local Need/ Essential Worker Accommodation

Proposals and Objectives

The proposal is to convert this shop into a single bedroomed flat for the specific use of essential workers or for person who comply with the Councils 'Local Need' criteria.

Appraising the Context

Existing Use

This site was used for many years as a garage for a local tour bus and then for car repairs. In 1982 permission was given to convert the garage into a shop. This has been run as the Man of War shop selling gifts and shipwreck artefacts since that time.

Existing Building

This is a two storeyed granite walled building with a slate pitched roof which was divided from the original garage to form three shops by means of concrete block separating walls. The accommodation above was added at a later date, 1985.

Reasons for Proposed Conversion

- 1) Due to the decline in visitor numbers over the past few years and the proliferation of other retail outlets, this shop does not make a viable income for the owners. In the past five or six years it is estimated that visitor numbers have fallen by as much as 25% which is borne out by the passengers carried by our only transport company. During this time permissions have been given for various existing buildings to be

used as part retail outlets. The Council has erected new shops at Porthcressa and there is a new outlet shortly to be opened on the quay. There have also been permissions given to provide craft workshops by extending buildings on the Industrial Estate and very recently the Council have built a complex which has the potential for another ten retail units. As you can imagine, the combined spending power of a reduced number of visitors has been seriously fragmented and this has had a disastrous effect on our income from the Man of War. In order to substantiate the above I enclose our audited Profit and Loss accounts for 2013 and 2014. You will see that in 2014 our profit was £4,388 which takes no account of the time and effort spent by both of us in repairs, improvements, buying time for stock and serving. I guess we must have been earning in the region of £2-£3 per hour. Nowhere near a living wage! As this shop is on the outskirts of the main retail area of St Mary's I cannot see any alternative trade that would now do any better and it is obvious that this business is now not viable.

- 2) Housing – According to a recent report the Islands will need near 100 extra houses in the next ten years. I cannot see how or where all these houses will be constructed without upsetting the beautiful environment of our Conservation Area and AONB. The other problem I can foresee is the Government's new policy, which will give tenants the 'Right to Buy' social houses provided by Housing Associations. Our social housing stock has already been decimated by giving tenants the 'Right to Buy' their Council houses. We therefore would suggest that this proposal will be of great benefit for two reasons:
 - a) There will be no right to have the S106 agreement removed and the property should remain virtually under Council control in perpetuity.
 - b) There will be no disturbance or detrimental effect on our Conservation Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Topography and Orientation

This property has the great advantage of being close to town and with superb views over St Mary's Harbour. It is on fairly level ground rising slightly to the east. It is low lying but not liable to flooding or tidal surges.

Boundaries

The boundaries are the existing external walls of the shop. There is no amenity land but the beach is only a matter of yards from the front entrance door.

Appearance

There will be only very minimal change to the external appearance as it is proposed to install a new window in the flank wall overlooking Well Cross.

Impact on Neighbours

There should be absolutely no impact on neighbours! In fact, as the proposal will probably have a maximum of two people occupying there will be far less people who could have the opportunity of looking out of the existing small rear window. This means that any possible 'overlooking' objection should not be

raised as there must be the possibility of thousands of possible viewers at the present time compared with a new proposed maximum of two ?

Sustainability

Objectives

Environmental sustainability is fundamental to the objectives of Central Government and the Local Authority. This building work will be carried out to the highest energy conservation standards and will be built in excess of Building Regulation requirements with regard to thermal insulation and sound insulation.

It is also an important Central Government objective to provide as much affordable local housing as possible , especially on 'Brownfield Sites'.

THIS PROPOSAL FILLS ALL OF THESE OBJECTIVES

Access

There will be absolutely no alterations to the access except there will be far less people using the entrance doorway.

T J Hiron, MRICS

23/9/15