

Application for removal of condition 2 of planning permission P2365 (23 April 1985) relating to Flat 2 Spanish Ledge, The Parade, St Mary's

Background

Spanish Ledge comprises two adjoining three-storey houses, built of local granite, with later extensions.

The premises, originally residential houses and later operated as a guest house, were converted into holiday flats in the mid-1980s.

Planning permission P2365 imposed a condition (no. 2) which stated 'that none of the proposed 9 flats shall be used for permanent accommodation without further planning permission'.

The reason for imposition of the condition was 'to be in accord with Policy 6A of the Structure Plan'. The Structure Plan in question, adopted in 1984, has long since been superseded.

Subsequently condition 2 was lifted from Flat 6 Spanish Ledge, a one-bedroom property, by planning application P/14/037 (24 September 2014).

Justification

Judging from the Planning Officer's report on planning application P/14/037, it appears that condition 2 was originally imposed due to the critical nature of the water supply at that time.

Needless to say, the infrastructure issues facing the islands have changed significantly over the last 30 years. Certainly the current Isles of Scilly Local Plan (2005) contains no restrictions on development on the basis of water shortages. Indeed a considerable number of planning applications for residential development have been approved in recent years.

Furthermore, given that the flat is available year-round for short-term lettings, there seems no reason to suppose that water consumption would actually increase as a result of relaxing condition 2 – particularly during the summer months when water consumption is more of an issue. In keeping with this, the Planning Officer's report on Flat 6 concluded that allowing permanent occupation would: 'provide some limited housing within Hugh Town *without adding any further strain on existing infrastructure*. The occupation of a single one-bedroom dwelling *would not be significantly different to its current use/occupation*.'

The Planning Officer further added that lifting the condition would 'represent a sustainable form of development' that would go some way to addressing the 'acute shortage of permanent dwellings' on the islands. In these ways, the Planning Officer clearly felt that lifting the restriction was consistent with both the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and the Isles of Scilly Local Plan.

These arguments in favour of lifting the restriction from ~~Flat 6~~ are all equally valid in the case of Flat 2.

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