

Land at 69a Seabrook Road, Hythe, Kent, CT21 5QW

Planning Statement

On behalf of Roma Capital Group

Erection of 9 residential apartments with ancillary car parking and landscaping following demolition of existing building

HPPC Ref: 31004

Date: August 2017



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application seeks permission for the erection of 9 residential flats with ancillary parking and landscaping, following demolition of existing building, in the land at 69a Seabrook Road, Hythe, Kent, CT21 5QW.
- 1.2 The area which the proposed development land lies in is primarily residential and the site has had permission for residential redevelopment in 2004 for an apartment block of 12 units, which has since lapsed.

2 SITE AND LOCATION

- 2.1 The proposed development site is set on Seabrook Road and benefits from a large private grass/garden area, separating it from the residential development to the south.
- 2.2 Access is off an existing service road connecting the site to Seabrook Road.
- 2.3 Historically the building was used as a convent with its current use being residential.
- 2.4 The site is of suitable dimensions to provide a 9 apartment building, including landscaped gardens, garages including safe cycle storage and parking with turning space.
- 2.5 The proposed development's sitting is where the existing building currently lies.
- 2.6 The site is well connected to nearby towns, with several bus stops located within walking distance of the site. Hythe High Street can be reached on foot, at a distance of approximately 1.2 miles. Folkestone is located approximately 3 miles away from the site, offering a further range of community amenities.
- 2.7 The setting is of urban character, with the surrounding developments being primarily residential. There is a residential property directly adjacent to the east of the site, separating it from Spire St Saviours Hospital and Highfield Private Rest Home, which are further to the east. The St Saviours Hospital site is proposed for housing development.
- 2.8 Foxwood School is located further to the northwest and The Children's Centre is located to the northwest of the proposed development site.

- 2.9 The land is set on a slight slope, with an elevated rear garden area. As such visual implications have been taken into consideration, as well as soil stability concerns, as it is located within a Latchgate zone (i.e. former landslip).

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Planning permission for the erection of 12 flats in three blocks was obtained in 2004 for this site. The proposal included ancillary car parking and landscaping, following the demolition of the existing building. This was approved (under reference Y03/1108/SH) with a number of conditions imposed but without any legal agreement.
- 3.2 This permission was not implemented and as such has now lapsed.

4 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 It is proposed that the existing building should be demolished and replaced by a 3 storey apartment building, providing 9 residential apartments with amenity space, including a 2-bed penthouse which is stepped back to reduce the overall mass of the proposal, 10 garages with safe cycle storage and 14 on-site parking spaces with room for turning, including visitor and disabled parking spaces.
- 4.2 Careful consideration has been taken not to impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, with no side-facing windows, a set-back at third floor level and a kinked front façade design, which also encourages sea views.
- 4.3 The sitting of the proposed development is the same as that of the existing. Access to the site will remain off the same track connecting it to Seabrook Road.
- 4.4 All proposed apartments benefit from good sized private terraces, enjoying views towards the seafront and gardens.
- 4.5 Careful consideration of environmental factors has been incorporated in the design and construction process, which is in line with the results of the ecological appraisal, the tree survey and other relevant survey documents.
- 4.6 Waste management concerning the proposed residential development has been addressed in the design, with secure refuse storage provided on site.
- 4.7 Design sustainability has been addressed throughout the proposal, through drainage and other infrastructure considerations in line with relevant surveys and the NPPF.

- 4.8 A Design and Access Statement accompanies this planning application, setting out how the proposed design solutions have been reached. A layout description, refuse/recycling and cycle storage plan are included in the Design and Access Statement.

5 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in March 2012. At the heart of the Framework is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' and promotes 'approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay' (paragraph 14).
- 5.2 Paragraph 14 addresses both decision making and decision taking; from allocating sites to granting planning permission for a scheme and requires consideration of three strands of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental).
- 5.3 The economic role is defined by the contribution to building a strong responsive and competitive economy, supporting growth and innovation and co-ordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.
- 5.4 The social role seeks to ensure the support for strong, vibrant and healthy communities to meet the needs of present and future generations and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.
- 5.5 Finally, the environmental role seeks to ensure the contribution to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.6 Where relevant policies are out of date, the Framework is clear that planning permission should be granted unless 'any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework when taken as a whole or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted'.
- 5.7 High quality design in new development (paragraph 56) is promoted.

5.8 The proposal is considered to be in line with the aims and requirements of the NPPF and the requirements for sustainable development in respect of the following points:

- The proposal would contribute to the economic and social role of sustainable development by supporting growth and innovation, by providing precedent for high architectural design standard and providing safe and comfortable living spaces to future residents, responding to the increased housing demand and thus meeting the community's needs, paragraph 7.
- Incorporating the use of a green roof in the design, rebuilding on previously developed land while utilising the same building location, with a footprint similar in shape of that of the existing while enhancing the immediate setting with carefully landscaped gardens and retention of most existing trees and vegetation, would meet the environmental requirements of sustainable development.
- A decision to support this proposal would take into account local circumstances, thereby ensuring they respond to the different opportunities to achieving sustainable development in different areas, (paragraph 10).
- The proposal is to rebuild in the place of an existing building, within a reasonably sustainable location, (paragraph 14), furthermore the NPPF advocates that development that generates significant movement should be located where the need for travel can be minimised and the use of sustainable modes maximised (paragraph 34). There are several available bus stops within walking distance and a good cycling network available connecting Hythe to Dymchurch and Folkestone, along with their community facilities. More detailed consideration to highway matters is given in the Transport Statement that accompanies this application.

Shepway Local Plan Review 2013

5.9 Policy SD1 addresses the importance of sustainable development in Shepway and lays out a list of environmental criteria which must be adhered to as appropriate. This proposal is in line with Policy SD1 as per the following points:

- It is located within an existing built-up area and on previously developed land
- It is an improvement of the character of the built environment, promotes a high quality of design and its density and appearance is appropriate for the specific location
- It maintains water, soil and air quality. The design features a green roof.

- It does not have a negative impact on existing tree and hedgerow cover or amenity space
 - It prevents negative impact on land drainage through the use of sustainable drainage approach
 - Its high quality architectural design enhances the quality of life of future residents
 - No net environmental loss is to occur during or after construction of this development
- 5.10 This proposal is in line with general principles regarding sustainable development such as environmental protection and encouraging socioeconomic growth.
- 5.11 Since the site is part of Shepway's Housing Land Supply 2005, the proposal is in line with point a. of Policy HO1, stating that '*redevelopment of previously developed sites or infill within existing urban areas*' is permitted.
- 5.12 In accordance with Policy BE1, the design and layout of the proposal is of the highest standard. Careful consideration has been taken to ensure the varied character of its setting in terms of materiality, scale, mass, design and visual implication will be respected. A detailed Design and Access statement with all the relevant details is provided with this application.
- 5.13 The proposal aims to enhance on-site vegetation via the aid of landscaped gardening as stated in Policy BE12. No important skylines are to be affected and the design, being similar to those in the surrounding area, should not have a negative visual impact on its surroundings. All this is to ensure that the ratio between developed and undeveloped land is protected. Landscaping details can be found in the Design and Access Statement accompanying this application.
- 5.14 According to Policy BE19, in order for planning permission to be granted within the area affected by land instability, an investigation and analysis needs to be undertaken, '*which clearly demonstrates that the site can itself be safely developed and that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on the slip area as a whole*'. A slope stability report together with a soil investigation would be carried out as a pre-commencement condition, post planning permission.
- 5.15 Secure and covered Cycle storage is provided for future residents of the proposed residential building in line with Policy TR5.
- 5.16 Policy TR11 regarding the creation of new access or traffic intensification states that development will only be permitted where the access is not detrimental to the safety

of vehicle traffic, cyclists and pedestrians or the access can be improved to an acceptable standard or *'the applicant can demonstrate by means of transport impact study that the proposal would not increase the risk of accidents or create delays'*. This is supported with this proposal and attached within the Transport Statement.

- 5.17 Ample parking provisions have been applied to the design proposal, satisfying Policy TR12.
- 5.18 LR9 Sites for less than 25 dwellings should contribute towards the provision and improvement of open space on a scale related to the size and nature of the development. The proposals retain a significant communal garden area and provide additional private space for each unit, satisfying Policy LR9.

Shepway Core Strategy 2013

- 5.19 The proposal is supported under Policy SS1, where it is stated that priority will be given to new developments on previously developed land in the urban area.
- 5.20 The proposal supports Policies SS1, SS2 regarding development in sustainable settlements with respect to the protection of the coastline and open countryside, as well as the managed growth of these settlements in a contributing way towards the Settlement Hierarchy.
- 5.21 With regards to Policy SS3, the proposal is considered to be compliant. The design is on previously developed land used for residential purposes, it is of suitable design, materiality, scale and mass to its setting, within a sustainable location. The proposal benefits from sustainable construction measures and will not have any adverse effects on its setting or the community.
- 5.22 Policy SS5 states that: *'planning permission will only be granted where suitable developer contributions are secured or are accompanied by a CIL liability notice and where:*
- *The design of the development aims to reduce unnecessary or unsustainable demands on physical and social/community infrastructure and environmental or utility network capacity;*
 - *Development does not jeopardise current or planned physical infrastructure;*
 - *The location, design or management of development provides a choice of transport and allows sustainable travel patterns for pedestrians, cyclists and/or public transport.'*

This proposal is in line with this Policy.

5.23 According to Policy CSD1 new development will be permitted if it complies with Policy SS3 and provided it contributes to the creation of balanced neighbourhood environments through high-quality design. This proposal is of high design standards and aims to improve the neighbourhood setting.

5.24 According to this Policy CSD1, development proposing up to 9 dwellings should provide at least one affordable dwelling on-site if available. However, updated Government Policy regarding affordable homes supersedes this policy and constitutes material consideration in planning applications. According to the NPPG:

There are specific circumstances where contributions for affordable housing and tariff style planning obligations (section 106 planning obligations) should not be sought from small scale and self-built development. This follows the order of the Court of Appeal dated 13 May 2016, which gave legal effect to the policy set out in the written ministerial statement of 28 November 2014 and should be taken into account. The circumstance relevant to this proposal is that;

- *Contributions should not be sought from development of 10 units or less and which have a maximum combined gross floor-space of no more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area).*

5.25 According to Policy CSD7, Hythe should develop as a high-quality residential centre for central Shepway, where new development should be constructed in line with Policy SS3. The proposal aims to accommodate this Policy.

Technical Standards for Housing

5.26 In March 2015, the Government published the Technical Housing Standards – a new national space standard which seeks to address continuity in internal room sizes nationally. The proposed scheme would be capable of meeting these requirements.

6 KEY ISSUES

6.1 The key issues are;

- Appropriateness of Location;
- Character and Appearance;
- Access;
- Drainage;
- Refuse Storage;
- Other Matters;

Appropriateness of Location

6.2 The proposed development site is contained within an urban area, surrounded by residential properties, making the location suitable for residential development in terms of impact of use on the area's character. The existing building's use is also residential. Re-developing the site would improve the area's immediate surroundings and safety and provide for better use of the land, with 9 units

6.3 There is demand for housing in the south of England. Contributing to the growth of Hythe would be in line with the settlement's hierarchy regarding priority for residential land development for the strengthening and growth of settlements in Shepway. With a current lack of 5 year housing supply within Shepway, this proposal will help to provide much needed residential units.

Character and Appearance

6.4 The proposal aims to complement the character of the area. The proposed building sits in the same location as the existing one. There are three storeys in total and a long frontage is proposed, which is in keeping with the heights and appearance of the surrounding developments, ranging mainly between 2 and 3 storeys with long façades. A reduced ground level and a stepped back penthouse are proposed in order to minimise visual impact.

The materiality of the building is described by high quality, variety and is well articulated in terms of external finishes, thus reflecting the diverse architectural styles, typical characteristic of the Hythe/Seabrook townscape. An overall high quality design is proposed, given the prominence of the location.

The front façade is designed with a kinked form and private terraces for each unit, redirecting views from neighbouring properties, thus preserving their privacy and encourage views towards the ocean.

There is a large communal garden space associated with the proposed development to the north and a smaller one on the south.

- 6.5 Massing diagrams, showing the relationship between the site and surrounding buildings accompanies this application. An assessment of the visual impact of the proposal is provided within the Design and Access Statement.

Access

- 6.6 The access road has been designed to in accordance with Kent Design Standards. It is from a sloping service road coming from the south and running along the east of the site, joining the hospital's existing access road before joining Seabrook Lane. Access onto Seabrook Road is possible using a normal access road design, 3 metres wide and with limited gradient. It has been shown that acceptable visibility sight lines already exist at the junction with Seabrook Road and are in compliance with Kent Design requirements.
- 6.7 There is a good cycle network available in Hythe with easy cycle routes to Folkestone in the east and Dymchurch to the west. Secure cycle storage is provided in secure locations to the rear of the undercroft garages, one space per apartment and 2 spaces for the penthouse.
- 6.8 2 on-site accessible parking or garage spaces are provided for each of the 8 units and 3 for the penthouse flat, including 2 disability and 3 visitor parking spaces. The proposal meets the Council's size and space requirements.
- 6.9 Intensification of the access onto a classified road through the cumulative impact of the surrounding development has not been considered negligible and therefore does not pose an issue. This is addressed within the Transport Statement, according to which there is no reason why planning consent cannot be given.
- 6.10 An existing public right of access running along the west side of the site is to be retained, as there is a shrine located to the rear of the site.

- 6.11 The development site is reasonable walking distance from local facilities and amenities. It is located within easy walking distance of 2 bus stops, 185m to the west and 115m to the east, connecting the site to Folkestone, Ashford and the wider region. Folkestone train station is accessible by bus service and it provides links to London and other major Kent centres. Services, routes and stops regarding bus, train and cycle transport, are detailed in the transport statement accompanying this document.

Drainage

- 6.12 The foul water will connect to the existing Combined Sewer in Seabrook Road, using the existing connection from the existing property on the site. The surface water will be attenuated on the site and discharge to the Combined Sewer at an agreed rate equivalent to the 1 in 1 year Greenfield runoff rate for the existing site. This constitutes a significant improvement over the currently uncontrolled discharge to the combined sewer, thus reducing flood risk in the area.
- 6.13 The proposed development is believed to generate less than 0.45 litres per second of net increase of peak foul flow rate, which is considered very low. Combined with the introduction of a flow control system, limiting peak discharge to 4l/s, which is substantially low compared to the current flow, according to the drainage and flood risk assessment, the overall capacity is considered acceptable.
- 6.14 Upper access road and parking will be constructed of sealed permeable pavements, providing an extra lever of water pollution control and improved slope stability. A sustainable surface water drainage strategy has been included in the design, providing an additional 40% allowance from increased rainfall, as a direct effect of climate change. A detailed analysis and information can be found in the flood risk assessment and drainage strategy report provided, according to which, the site can be drained satisfactorily and in accordance with Local Policy and the NPPF.
- 6.15 All surface water runoff will be dealt with by use of sealed systems with outfalls to public sewer, thus underlying hydrology is not relevant. Pollution risk will be assessed using the Source, Pathway, Receptor model.
- 6.16 According to the provided surface water flood risk information obtained from the Environment Agency website, the development site is not at risk of flooding from

overland flows. A detailed analysis can be found in the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy report accompanying this statement.

Refuse Storage

- 6.17 A secure refuse store is provided to the front of the building, accommodating both general waste and recycling. The bins are to be moved as part of the management strategy to the bottom of the hill, adjacent to Seabrook Road, where they will be collected.

Other Matters

- 6.18 There are very few designations tied to the proposed development land. The site is in an Area of Archaeological Potential. However, a Desk Based Archaeological analysis (DBA) was not deemed necessary by the Council Archaeologist for the site directly below (69 Seabrook Road) and as our site is directly adjacent to this site, we have concluded that a DBA should not be deemed necessary for our site.
- 6.19 There is one tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to the southwest of the proposed building site. The proposal aims to retain most existing trees and vegetation as well as enhance the natural environment with the aid of landscaped garden design and the incorporation of a green roof. 6 existing trees will be affected by the proposal and no development will affect any of the remaining root protection areas. More details can be found in the Design and Access Statement's landscape plan as well as the accompanying tree survey.
- 6.20 The site is not at risk from flooding from marine, river or surface water events and is located outside Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. A topographical survey did not identify the presence of watercourses or any other natural water bearing features within the site. The site will represent a reduced flood risk to off-site property as a result of the development.
- 6.21 As the development involves demolition of an existing building, a preliminary ecological appraisal has been carried out and accompanies this application. The report has concluded that although there is some reptile evidence on site, the associated reptile habitat loss would be minimal and that the reptile population on-site can be successfully retained, following simple mitigation procedures. No further evidence of protected species were recorded on-site, however bat friendly lighting will

have to be incorporated in the design, as there was evidence of foraging and commuting bats but no roosting bats.

- 6.22 The site lies within a Land Instability area, where landslip is possible. Previously, development of this site was permitted with the use of a Latchgate condition. It is therefore proposed that should a soil investigation and slope stability report were deemed necessary, they would be carried out as a pre-commencement condition, post planning permission.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed redevelopment of this site following demolition of the existing building, to form a single block of 9 residential flats is compliant with the Development Plan Policy in this urban location.
- 7.2 The development is proposed to be set in the same location as the existing which is to be demolished, with a similar shape in terms of footprint, thus minimising impact on site.
- 7.3 There is a green roof proposed for the development and SUDs provision. That, together with the relative mitigation requirements provided by the surveys undertaken, accentuates the sustainability of this proposal.
- 7.4 This redevelopment would cater to the Council's housing needs by providing high quality residential units, which would reflect the unique architectural character of the area.
- 7.5 The proposal would make best use of previously developed land, retaining the residential character of the surrounding area and improving the immediate visual setting.
- 7.6 As such, it is respectfully requested that the application be approved.