

REVIEW REFERENCE NO: 12/0015/LRB

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF CASE BY THE PLANNING AUTHORITY OF ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL

The Statement of Case states “Due to the restricted nature of the land holding afforded to the proposed development, it is considered that an insufficient area of private useable amenity space would be afforded to the residential unit compared to the high amenity values and large plots that are predominant in the area”.

The footprint of the building is 96m² and the total plot area is 295m². Less than one third of the plot is occupied by the building. Clearly over development is not applicable. The adjoining permanently occupied buildings have far less amenity space. This can be confirmed at a site inspection and it can be demonstrated that the building would not have unacceptably low privacy and amenity standards compared to the other units. Reference is made to the fact that those four properties would have been assessed on their suitability for permanent residential use. No evidence has been advanced to show how those properties have been assessed.

Every planning application is dealt with on its own merits and if the review was successful it would not set a precedent as the majority of the remaining holiday units do not have sufficient amenity ground for permanent occupation.

Policy LP HOU1 gives a presumption in favour of housing in the countryside and there is no unacceptable environmental servicing or access impact with the property called Harbour Master.

The removal of one self catering property would not weaken the existing tourist economy of the area. There are many self catering properties in the area. Thirty two other holiday cottages are located at Melfort Village which is very near Melfort Pier.

This property is no longer required for staff accommodation as the restaurant has closed and planning permission has been granted for the Change of Use to a dwelling house from a restaurant. (Ref: 11/01407PP). Staffing at the complex has been reduced from 10 full time and 4 part time to 2 and 1 respectively. This again proves that the income is declining.

During the first week of December all the self catering units were empty but the four privately owned properties were occupied. Contractors were working in three of the four buildings upgrading and renovating.

There has been a decline in tourism income in the area and Argyll & Bute is one of the few Council areas where the population is falling. A fall of nearly 4% has been recorded.

There is no good reason for the Review Panel to refuse the Variation of Condition as submitted for this one unit.

