

## **B/15/01196 Additional Tabled Paper**

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**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2020 2:44:48 PM

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**Subject:** URGENT: Application Reference B/15/01196, Land to the rear of 1-6 The Street, Kersey

Dear Councillors,

My apologies for emailing you once more, but further information has come to light which is relevant to the above application and which, inexplicably, the Applicant has chosen not to disclose.

My client has reminded me that in this case, not only are there already 5 empty rental properties in Kersey, but one of them, the Grade II\* listed, Number 4 The Street is effectively owned by the Applicant. In other words, by keeping this property empty, the Applicant is partly responsible for creating the need on which it relies to justify its planning application.

By way of evidence, I have attached the title register to 4 The Street (dated 13 July 2020), the last filed Annual Return of Leigh Properties Ltd and the last filed Annual Return of Rural Community Housing Ltd (i.e. the Applicant for planning permission). Both Annual Returns are public documents available at Companies House.

You will see from the title register (Section B, Proprietorship Register), that Leigh Properties owns 4 The Street. You will also see from the two annual returns, that both Leigh Properties and Rural Community Housing are 100% owned by Mr Andrew Harding, Mr James Harding and Mr Richard Harding, who are also in both cases the company directors / company secretary (and the Companies House website confirms that that is still the case).

You will be aware, that Policies CS2 and CS11 require a local housing need assessment to justify development both within a hinterland village such as Kersey, and for any development outside of a village's built up area boundaries. The contents of a local need assessment are not prescribed anywhere, but if an applicant for planning permission is relying on a need for rental properties to justify their proposal, the fact that there already are empty rental properties in Kersey, including in particular one effectively owned by the applicant, is a relevant material consideration and should have been disclosed.

All parties agree that the Application is harmful to the setting of the Grade II\* listed 1-6 The Street and to the Kersey Conservation Area. For the reasons I set out in my letter of 10 July, it is also contrary to a raft of other significant policies. If permission is granted, not only will that harm be actually realised, but the people who stand behind the Applicant company will be rewarded for having left the Grade II\* listed Number 4 empty and neglected for a number of years and for not having actively made it available for letting.

Thank you for your time considering this email.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Kelly

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