



include provision for grey water treatment and re-use, and all development shall include for sustainable treatment of sewage without risk of pollution.

b) SII: Primary Policy

Development permission will be granted for all development reasonably needed for the social development of the Island and such development shall be designed to be sustainable in all services including collection, storage and re- use of rainwater and storage, treatment and re-use of grey water;

c) SD1, SD4 &SD7 Sewerage and Storm Drainage

d) IZ(g)(i):effective and sustainable means of dealing with sewage and solid waste, sufficient to avoid pollution

e) W.2.Water Security

f) IZ(G)(ii)collection and re-use of rainwater and means of dealing with surplus surface water

g) Energy Policy: E4 and E8

h) Parking Spaces: RT7

i) Colour of Roof Policy

## 6. RATIONALE BEHIND THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to develop a tourist attraction (a visitor centre) centred around showcasing St Helena's marine treasures, additional to a marine laboratory to include rentable bench space for visiting researchers, and discrete office space for the Marine Team. The proposal is intended to enhance the island's 'Blue Economy' and is consistent with growing the 'Academia, Research and Conferences' sector, outlined as an expanding export sector in the Sustainable Economic Development Plan (SEDP).

i) Location and Orientation: The site is situated at the Seafront, north of the Customs Terminal Building and was previously known as 'The Sand Yard'. This building was recently upgraded to its current state and is currently known as the Freight Terminal Building

ii) Zones & Restrictions: The development falls within the Intermediate Zone and also the Jamestown Conservation Area (Heritage Coast) where built heritage issues are a consideration

iii) Development Proposals: The Applicant proposes some minimal external changes, but significant internal changes to the building by converting a part of it to Marine Laboratory, a Marine Visitor Centre and Marine Offices. As a Freight Terminal Building, it has a very limited use going forward, because of the plan to relocate passenger freight and Customs operations to Ruperts. As an asset, SHG needed to consider best alternative use for the building and Marine Conservation activities will bring a use relevant to the function of the Seafront/Wharf.

The development proposal requests permission to install a mezzanine floor into the roof space currently available and a balcony on either side of the building (east and west) to serve (among other things) as a viewing deck for marine life in the harbour and a fire escape on the side to the cliff face. The balconies will need to be carefully designed to align them with a similar installation on the adjacent Customs Terminal building with the desired effect of trying to keep them in symmetry. The windows proposed for the south gable end will need to be redesigned to ensure they match existing windows in the building. It is also proposed to change the current large openings by incorporating smaller standard size doors and wood cladding to infill the remaining space, keeping the original Freight Terminal doors in front as a feature.

Other internal changes like platform lift, stairs, stud partitioning, staff facilities etc. are also proposed and provided they satisfy Building Regulation requirements, should not become an issue for concern.

Given that this building lost most, if not all, of its heritage value as a building, following its recent demolition and rebuild, it will now be difficult to use that argument as a means of now providing protection 'after the horse has bolted'. This is not to say that we can now disregard any further protective measures to the building, as we still have a responsibility to ensure any future alterations are aligned to other neighbouring buildings in the immediate surrounds. There is no doubt that our built heritage has a very important role to play in the island's future, but it is also essential to have a balanced view point so as not to allow it to stifle our ability to develop resources in support of the Island's future needs and progress our economy, together with a means to sustain it.

The debate ‘protection of the built heritage versus future needs and development’ is always going to be a contentious one and both sides of the argument have to be carefully considered before making a decision. This particular issue, it could be said, was decided for us when the decision was made prior to the buildings last upgrade, which effectively eroded any historic value it might have had.

**iv) Built Heritage Context:**

The LDCP section 25.5 states: Conservation of the historic built environment is critical to the success of tourism growth on the Island, as well as being appropriate in conserving an internationally important resource. However, development of the Island is paramount if it is to meet its primary objective of becoming economically independent. As such there will be a balance to be met between the preservation of the historic asset, and the wealth generation necessary to help fund such preservation through planning gain. The review policies seek to strike this balance, and where there is potential loss then processes will be put in place to record and mitigate.

The balance in this case can take two routes, to preserve as is, which will likely result in an underutilised building, having already been damaged as an historic asset (as mentioned above) or regenerate the building through best use and try to align its external character with that of the adjacent Customs Terminal Building. It could be argued that this building is caught in the middle, in as much that to its north can be regarded as a fine example of a complete surviving East India Company port, whilst to the south is a fine modern building attempting to connect the Terrace/Castle with the Wharf. In heritage terms the recent Freight Terminal upgrade is a far cry from the original Sand Yard, with some major design changes to make the building fit for purpose, thereby losing its heritage value. The current application is the next phase in striking the balance between appropriate uses of the building and ensuring some form of symmetry is maintained with its big brother to the south.

Further, it is noted, the objector’s representations in respect of the non-compliance of the proposed development with planning policy, but he has merely quoted clauses and not specific breaches and therefore these do not constitute material planning considerations, other than would be normal for a planning officer to take into consideration in respect of this type of development, as part of his day to day duties. In respect of his missives about UNESCO World Heritage site status, this is aimed at the Natural Environment rather than the Built Environment, and although this

is an important issue, as previously stated there is a balance to be struck.

v) Summary

This development falls within the Heritage Coastal Zone and can be supported in terms of siting, scale, layout, proportion, details and external materials and therefore can be allowed.

vi) LDCA and CPO recommend approval with the following conditions:

- 1) This permission will lapse and cease to have effect on the day, five years from the date of the Decision Notice, unless the development has commenced by that date.

Reason: required by Section 31(2) of the Land Planning and Development Control Ordinance 2013.

- 2) This Development Permission does not confer approval under the Building Control Ordinance. The applicant is required to consult with the Building Inspector(s) to find out whether building regulations approval is required, prior to the development commencing.

Reason: to ensure development is carried out in accordance with the Building Control Ordinance 2013.

- 3) The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details specified on the Application Form:: Conversion of the Frieght Terminal building into a marine Visitor Centre, Marine Marine Laboratory and Marine Offices as the building layout floor plan (Dwg Nos. 04/01/2019, 04/02/2019, 04/03/2019), as stamped dated 17 April 2019 and approved by the Chief Planning Officer on behalf of the Land Development Control Authority, subject to Condition of the Dceision |Notice and unless the prior written approval of the Chief Planning Officer is obtained for an amendment to the approved details under Section 29 of the land development Control Ordinance 2013.

Reason: Standard condition to define the terms of the development and to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with the approved details.

- 3a) Before the alterations to the front elevation are commenced, detailed drawing setting out all the feature and materials to be used on the new opening to be made and existing opening

altered is submitted to the Chief Planning Officer for approval in writing on behalf of the Land Development Control Authority, subject to Condition of the Decision Notice under Section 29 of the Land Development Control Ordinance 2013.

Reason: In order to ensure that the details around the new openings and alterations to the existing openings on front elevation matches the details, material and colour of stone dressings that are design feature of the building.

- 4) The development shall be implemented in accordance with the details specified in the Justification and Design & Access Statement as stamped and approved by the Chief Planning Officer, on behalf of the Land Development Control Authority, subject to the Condition of the Decision Notice and unless the prior written approval of the Chief Planning Officers obtained for an amendment to the approved details under Section 29 of the Land Development Control Ordinance, 2013.

Reason: Standard condition to define the terms of the development and to ensure that the development is implemented in accordance with the approved details.

- 5) During Construction of the development, no obstruction shall be caused on any public road and to reinstate damage to any public road and other public or private infrastructure/structure arising from implementation of the development permission.

Reason: To ensure safe vehicular access and reinstate damage to public infrastructure arising directly from the approved development in accordance with Planning Policy IZ 1(g).

- 6) All works are to be carried out in an appropriate manner (good craftsmanship) and all proposed materials to be used shall have due consideration to the restrictions associated with Built Heritage Buildings in the Jamestown Conservation area and approved by the Chief Planning Officer.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed work are carried out in line with LDCP BH 1, 2, 3 & 5.

- 7) Any External Lights shall be designed and sited so that they do not emit light at or above the horizontal and the light source shall not be visible beyond the site boundaries.

Reason: to support SHG's intention to apply for International Dark Skies status of St Helena in accordance with LDCP

Policy E8.

- 8) The Colour of Roofs shall be slate grey.

Reason: to blend the building into the landscape, in accordance with the Adopted Policy on Colour of Roofing Materials.

- 9) The proposed Development shall not be occupied until its Foul Drains (to include both black & grey water) have been connected to the existing communal system. All pipework to be laid underground unless otherwise agreed with the Chief Planning Officer.

Reason: To avoid creating pollution and to accord with LDCP policies SD1 and SD7.

- 10) Occupation of the development is not permitted until it is adequately served by a potable water supply, adequate energy supply as well as a connection to an approved sewerage system.

Reason: To accord with LDCP Policies IZ1, SD1, RT7 and W3.

- 11) No Roof Water or other Surface Water shall be connected to or directed to any foul drain. Roof water shall be piped to storage tanks of minimum capacity 450 litres with overflow piped to landscaped areas.

Reason: to conserve rainwater and to avoid overloading the Septic Tank, in accordance with LDCP Policy SD1.

- 12) Stormwater should be managed on site and not allowed onto the public roadway or neighbouring properties.

Reason: To protect public and private amenity and accord with Development Plan Policy SD1.

Further Advisory:

a) The applicant is required to ensure selection of modest wall-colours (such as earthy tones, etc.) and natural external finishing (such as stone, wood) that will blend in with the natural and/or surrounding built environment.

b) Application required for electricity from Connect Saint Helena Ltd

**FINANCIAL  
IMPLICATIONS**

7. Executive Council acts as the Planning Authority in this case.

**ECONOMIC  
IMPLICATIONS**

8. The Marine centre shall be a significant step forward for developing St Helena as a ‘living laboratory’, embracing the Blue Economy. St Helena’s Geography is one of the island’s biggest comparative advantages, so enhancing this advantage is a continued step towards economic prosperity for three reasons:

- Showcasing the marine life adds to the tourist attractions available on St Helena.
- Allowing visiting researchers to rent bench space in the laboratory adds to the services available to the ‘academia, research and conferences’ sector, which is promoted within the SEDP.
- Providing office and laboratory space to the Marine Team facilitates colocation of researchers funded from providers such as Darwin, Cefas as well staff funded by SHG’s own Marine Budget. It is estimated that external funding of the type is in the region of £1m per annum and there could be the ability to double that in 10 years, should there be capacity.

9. The project will provide a previously untapped resource of ‘research tourism’ revenue generation for the Island and SHG, as the laboratory/office space (bench space) will be rented to external researchers. These visiting researchers will also generate further revenue by using the Island’s accommodation/restaurants.

10. Furthermore the construction of the Marine Centre will provide employment opportunities for the construction sector.

**CONSISTENCY  
WITH  
INVESTMENT  
POLICY  
PRINCIPLES  
PUBLIC / SOCIAL  
IMPACT**

11. Not Applicable

12. There should not be any adverse social/public impact as the Marine Centre is not within the immediate vicinity of a residential area.

13. The development of the marine centre will provide a positive impact publically and socially, with the laboratory/visitors centre providing the opportunity to further develop education and outreach to the Island’s population.

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT**

14. The conversion of this building into a marine centre will not have any significant impacts on the natural environment. The operation of the new Marine Offices, Lab and Visitor Centre will have positive environmental impacts through providing a ‘purpose built’ focal facility for marine conservation, protection,

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research and education for the Island.

**PREVIOUS  
CONSULTATION /  
COMMITTEE  
INPUT**

15. Consultation was carried out with the Waterfront Working Group to see if there were any concerns in relation to the application. A meeting was suggested by the applicant to convey the details of the proposal but the working group confirmed this would not be required and no concerns were raised on behalf of the waterfront working group in regards to the application (this was confirmed by Councillor Scipio on behalf of the working group in various emails).
16. ENRC Committee discussed the Marine Laboratory on 20 September 2018 and several further meetings.
17. The Application was published in accordance with the requirements of the Land Planning and Development Control Ordinance, 2013 and Relevant Stakeholders consulted.
18. Key Stakeholders included SHNT, Heritage Society and EMD whom have all supported in Principle.

**PUBLIC  
REACTION**

19. There has been one objection received from the general public attached as Annex D. CPO has responded.
20. No objections from Stakeholders were received Annex C.
21. This could possibly generate public and media interest but it is likely that the decision will be received positively by the public especially if the laboratory/visitors centre provides the opportunity to further develop education and outreach to the Island's population.

**PUBLICITY**

22. The decision will be mentioned in the ExCo Report and associated radio broadcast.

**SUPPORT TO  
STRATEGIC  
OBJECTIVES**

23. This paper supports Strategic Objective 3.1 - Ensure sustainable economic development. Revenue generation from both the laboratory 'bench space' and increase in tourists at the visitors centre will help to contribute to the Island's economy.
24. It also supports Strategic Objective 7.1 Promote the sustainable management and use of natural resources and the environment. The development will improve the EMD Marine Section's ability to carry out their regulatory work in a safe manner. It will also improve the quality of research undertaken which will help to better manage the Island's marine environment.

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**LINK TO  
SUSTAINABLE  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN GOALS**

25. The application contributes to multiple SEDP goals:

*Goal 1 to increase exports*, in this case a research facility provided to visitors; *Goal 3 attract visitors and increase tourism*, in this case research tourists using the laboratory and recreational tourists using the visitors centre; *Goal 7 of the SEDP to improve public infrastructure* -in this case to provide an environment that promotes investment, attracts visitors and tourists, and encourages the return of St Helenians living abroad.

26. Goal 7 of the SEDP is to improve public infrastructure, to provide an environment that promotes investment, attracts visitors and tourists, and encourages the return of St Helenians living abroad.

27. The application also relates specifically to the section entitled 'Academia, Research and Conferences', which specifically states that 'The existing network of environmentalists, and abundance of endemics are factors which could encourage the introduction of a research centre'

**S O'B**

**OPEN /CLOSED  
AGENDA ITEM**  
Corporate Support  
Corporate Services

Recommended for the open agenda.

**25<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

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