

Planning Officer's Report - LDCA 3 September 2026

APPLICATION	2026/28 – Construction of Waste-Water Treatment Works (WWTW) to treat sewage from Jamestown
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Full Permission
REGISTERED	11 March 2026 (Re-registered 1 April 2026 - correct Application Form)
APPLICANT	Economic Development Investment Programme (EDIP), SHG
PARCEL	JT020013 & JT020018
SIZE	423 m ²
LAND OWNER	Solomons & Co. Lease (JT020018)/Crown Land (JT020013)
LOCALITY	The Sand Yard, Jamestown
ZONE	Intermediate Zone
CONSERVATION AREA	Historic Coast Conservation Area
CURRENT USE	Sand Yard is used as a commercial use (Use class B2: General industrial)
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: ▪ Local Newspaper on 13 March 2026 (20 May 2026 & 23 July 2026) ▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	27 March (4 June 2026 & 9 August 2026)
REPRESENTATIONS	Two (and one "late")
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewerage and Water (Connect)	No Response
2. Energy	No Response
3. Fire & Rescue	No Response
4. Roads Section	No Objection

5. Property Division	No Objection; No objection to revised plans
6. ENRP – Environmental Protection	No Objection (Comments); No objection (Comment)
7. Environmental Health	No Objection (Comments); No objection (comments)
8. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No further comments (see 7. Above)
9. St Helena Police Services	No Response
10. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Consulted
11. Economic Development - Trade and Investment	No Objection (Comments)
12. National Trust	No Response
13. SURE SA Ltd.	No Objection; No comments on revised plans
14. Heritage Society	No Objection (Comments)
15. Maritime	Not Applicable; N/A on revised plans

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

PLANNING BACKGROUND

Three Development Applications were submitted by Connect St Helena Ltd. ("Connect") in 2016 for three outline proposals on 26.9.16 (Valid on 27.9.2016) :

DA Ref 2026/136 – Half Tree Hollow Sewerage Treatment Plant

DA Ref 2016/137 – Jamestown Sewerage Treatment Plant

DA Ref 2016/138 – Combined Jamestown and Half Tree Hollow Sewerage Treatment Plant

Given the close nature of the proposals and the combined version, the three applications were considered together in one report by the then Chief Planning Officer and both the LDCA and the Governor In Council (ExCo in Planning; ECIP).

The Planning Officer recommendation (report dated 20.6.2017) to the LDCA meeting was that the 2016/137 proposal should be approved.

ECIP decided to approve under a joint Decision Notice, a combined Jamestown and Half Tree Hollow single sewerage handling system which was regarded as the most sustainable option of the three proposals. The exact wording is:

"GRANTED OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT PERMISSION to Conduct Exploration Works and Develop Design Details (with the view to submit as Full Planning Application) for a proposed Sewage Handling and Management Facility to serve the Greater Half Tree Hollow and Jamestown Areas, which will consist of the following key elements:

- a) *A **proposed Sewer Pipeline** (encased in a concrete service duct) to run alongside the southern apron of Jacob's Ladder down to the position of the existing culvert underneath the Ladder (currently approximately a third-way from the bottom of the Jacob's Ladder) from where it will run northwards (encased in a concrete duct under a surface drain) towards a proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station Facility to be located at the Sand Yard Site in Jamestown (Parcels JT020013 and JT020018);*
- b) *A **proposed Ladder Hill Raw Sewage Screening Plant** (Black Water Screening) - to be located in a suitable location within the confines of Ladder Hill, with this plant to receive all raw sewage discharged from Half Tree Hollow, Clay Gut, Sapperway and Ladder Hill, with the plant to ensure that only screened effluent (all solids and foreign matter removed) will be discharged along the proposed Sewer Pipeline to run along the Ladder between Ladder Hill and Jamestown;*
- c) *A **proposed Stilling Chamber**, to be sited in a suitable location along the alignment of the above-mentioned proposed Sewer Pipeline to dissipate the flow energy / velocity of the effluent as it flows towards the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station;*
- d) *A **proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station**, to be placed underground (unless otherwise agreed) at the Sand Yard Site from where screened effluent will be pumped to sea via a proposed Marine Outfall System;*
- e) *As the Jamestown Sewerage Network is also to drain towards the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station, a **proposed Jamestown Raw Sewage Screening Plant** - to be sited within the confines of the Sand Yard Site – will be developed upstream of the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station, in order to intercept any solids and foreign matter from the Jamestown Sewerage Network, prior to it flowing into the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station;*
- f) ***Proposed Odour Control Facilities** for both the Ladder Hill and Jamestown Raw Sewage Screening Plants, with the latter to also serve the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station, with these facilities to mitigate against odour nuisance emanating from these plants;*
- g) *A **proposed Marine Outfall System**, to consist of the following:*
 - *A **proposed Landside Effluent Pumping Main** – to be laid from the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station at the Sand Yard Site, along the road access to West Rocks from the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station;*
 - *A **proposed Marine Outfall**, to consist of a pipe of approximately 500m in length, to be laid offshore from West Rocks along the ocean bed to a depth of approximately 25m, where it will terminate in a **proposed Effluent Discharge Diffuser**."*

In relation to Development Application 2016/137 the Jamestown Sewerage Treatment Plant at The Sand Yard, the combined Decision Notice does not particularly refuse this proposal, albeit that a combined proposal was approved which is what development Application 2016/138 related to. At the same time Development Application 2016/136 the HTH separate application was “not been granted” nonetheless, the decision notice does specify that what was approved in outline, subject to further investigation, was:

- A Jamestown Sewage Pump Station
- a Jamestown Raw Sewage Screening Plant (upstream of the proposed Jamestown Sewage Pump Station)
- Odour Control Facilities (to serve Jamestown Sewage Pump Station)
- And a Marine Outfall System including a Landside Effluent Pumping Main (from Jamestown Sewage Pump Station at the Sand Yard Site to West Rocks and a proposed Marine Outfall pipe laid offshore from West Rocks terminating in a proposed Effluent Discharge Diffuser.

While the above was to form part of a combined system (to include sewerage treatment for HTH), the individual parts were agreed in outline for Jamestown to meet, in parts, its own needs for this infrastructure. Therefore the Sand Yard has previously been considered to be appropriate for at least part of a larger sewerage treatment system which was to then be the subject of a detailed (Full) Development application.

Current progress:

A decade on from the above grant of outline consent, there has been no full application for a combined JT/HTH sewerage plant by Connect (the original applicants).

The applicants indicate that work was undertaken by SHG’s PMO Section which concluded that the combined Sewage Treatment Plant linking Jamestown and Half Tree Hollow was not feasible, particularly in relation to providing a suitable arrangement to one side of Jacobs Ladder.

The lack of a suitable sewerage treatment plant has resulted in continuing raw sewage being pumped out into the marine environment of James Bay. This is an area where people swim/dive and enjoy all water-based activities. While alternative solutions can be provided privately in Half Tree Hollow with septic tanks and soakaways or small private sewage treatment plants within larger plots, Jamestown is the densest of the urban areas on the Island and other provision is therefore extremely difficult for both residential and businesses as this would require a combination of septic tanks and soakaways or private treatment plants in gardens/courtyard areas. The lack of a communal sewerage processing plant is affecting the ability of Jamestown (the second most populous area) to meet its own infrastructure needs, affecting social and

economic development, including Tourism, of the Capital City of St. Helena, as well as the environment.

Environmental Impact Assessment

In relation to the current application, a Screening (and scoping) Opinion submission on 2.7.25 was made under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. The Opinion (Reference.: SCR/2025/02) was adopted on 21/08/2025 indicating that an EIA was not required to be submitted with the Development Application. Notwithstanding, various documents were required to be submitted with the Development Application as follows:

- Historic Impact Assessment
- Landscaping and Visual Analysis
- Impact Assessment on fauna in the vicinity
- Impact Assessment on the marine environment
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- A Risk Assessment of the impact on neighbouring properties
- Details of Handling Arrangements for waste management (during and after construction)

LOCALITY & ZONING

The application site is situated at the lowest part of Jamestown at the Sand Yard which is located at the base of the western cliff which rises to Half Tree Hollow. The application site is within the Intermediate Zone and also the Heritage Coast Conservation Area at the western end, and in advance, of the main sea fortifications to Jamestown.

Site Description:

The application site under Solomons & Co/Crown ownership is roughly rectangular and 423 sq.m in size. The application site extends onto Crown land including out to West Rocks and to existing manholes and the Mule Yard sewerage cesspit, all in lower Jamestown, where it will connect with the existing sewers.

There is an existing Unclassified Road/Tertiary Road to the north/east of the application site which lead east to The Wharf and the Arch to the Grand Parade.

The surrounding area includes significant Historical Assets (The Jamestown Fortifications, The War Memorial Monument, The Castle, Jacob's Ladder as well as other Listed Buildings along Seaside/The Wharf and around Grand Parade). Directly to the south of the application site is an elevated car park to the rear of The Museum which contains the only public electric vehicle charging point in Jamestown. To the east/south are various commercial and community uses including Donny's Night Club

which includes Get Carter's Pizzeria, The Deck which is part of the St Helena Coffee Shop, New Horizon's Youth centre with an outdoor court/stage and sometimes takeaways from their kitchen, The Arch shop and takeaway. Beyond the bridge are The Mule Yard bar and social gatherings space with a snack bar and the former customs house also provides takeaway food services with pop-ups including Mylyn's Chinese, Amphibian's bar and Skipps (bar, cocktail bar, food and ice-cream). In the Grand Parade are usually other food pop-ups including Philly's and Borb's Ice-cream van and it is often used for social gatherings such as St Helena Day, albeit in 2026, this celebration was moved to The Wharf for the first time.

The Cliffs are partly protected from rock fall by nets and Rock Guards regularly attend to ensure that there are no significant rock falls.

Diagram 1: Location Plan – wider catchment plan

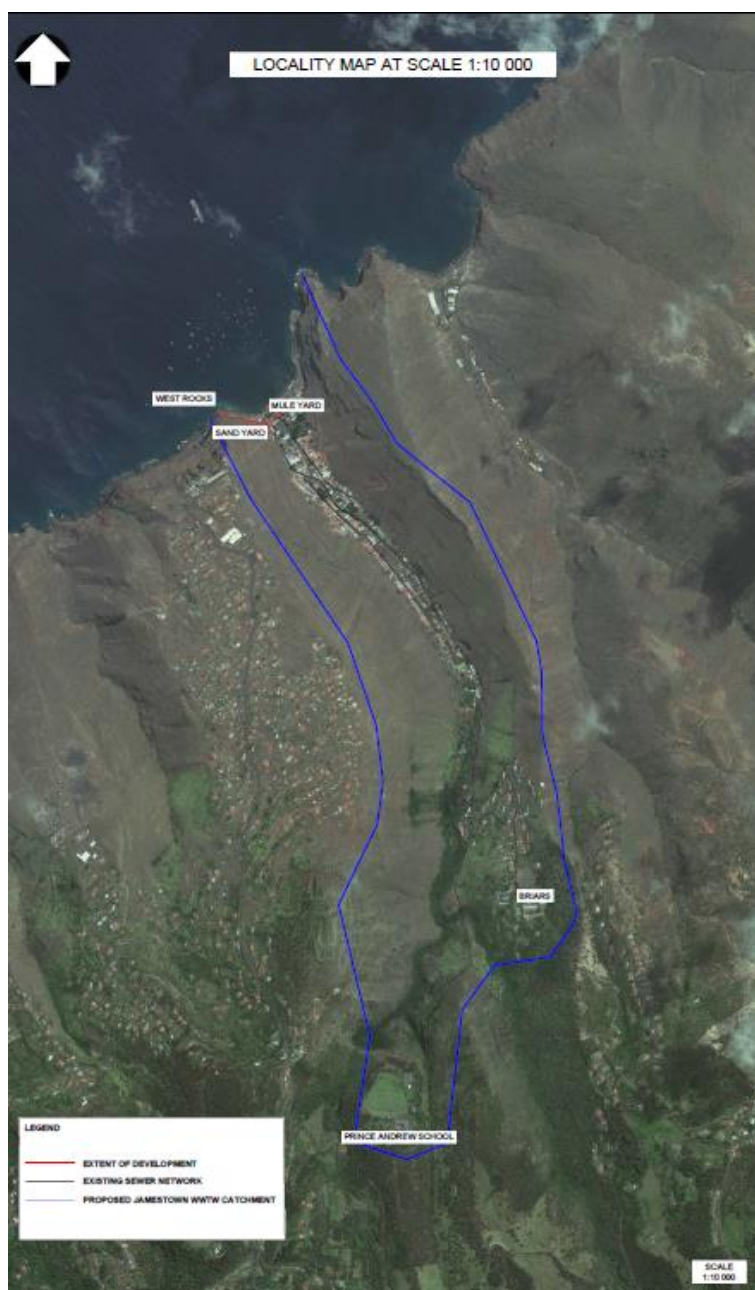


Diagram 2: Location Plan – Site



Diagram 3: Photograph of the Application site and cliff:



(View from the East)

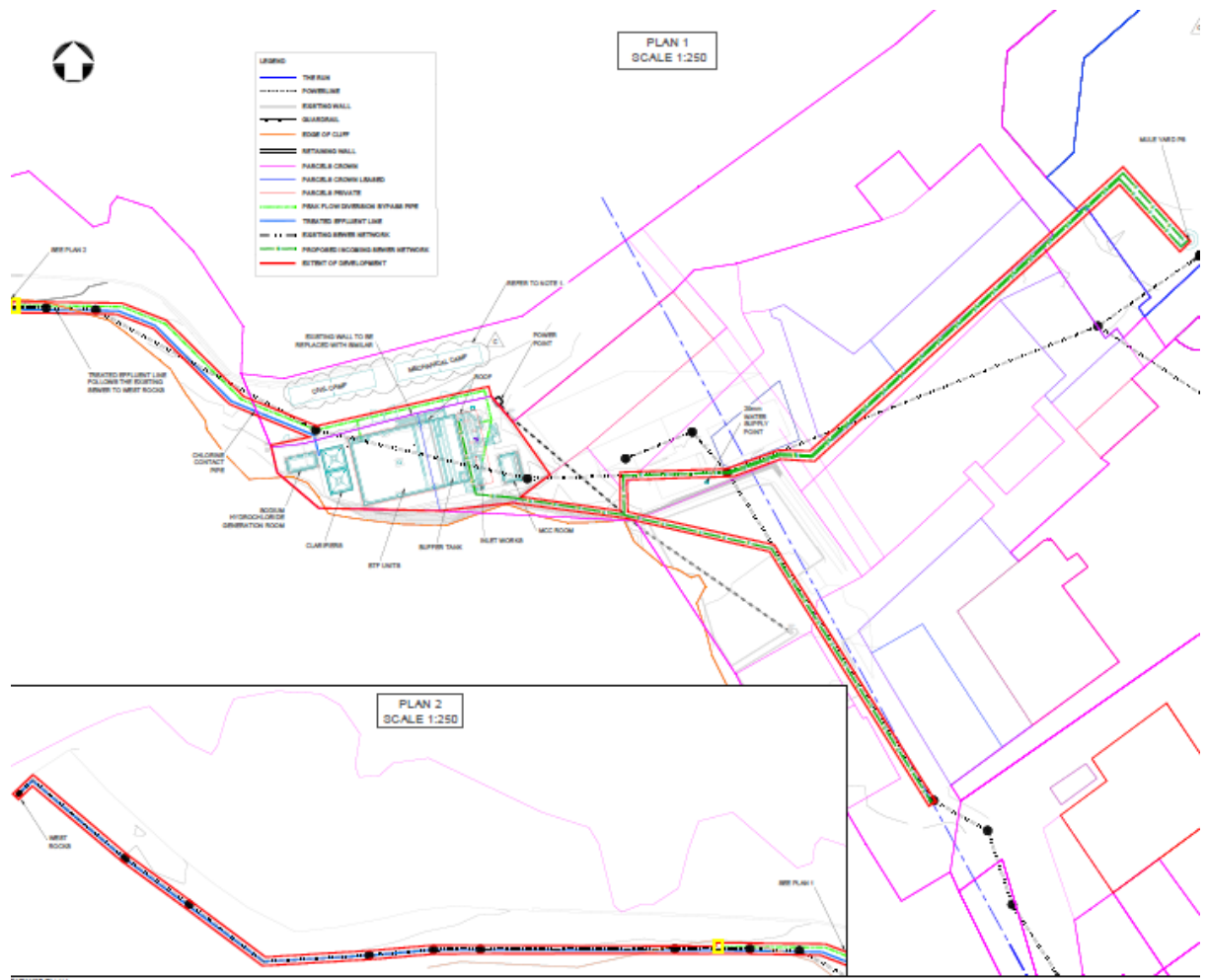
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Applicant proposes to construct a Wastewater treatment Works (WWTW) in a Use of its own (or “sui generis”) comprising a mix of buildings, tanks and works of approximately 170 sq.m to treat sewage from the Jamestown Catchment Area which extends to include The Briars and Francis Plan, including St Helena Secondary School. This would ensure that treated effluent complies with UK and European Union Treatment requirements and will comprise the following:

1. Concrete Inlet Works
2. Buffer Tank
3. Biological Trickling Filter (BTF)
4. Humus Tanks
5. Chlorine Contact Channel
6. Sodium Hypochlorite Generation Building; and
7. Motor Control Centre

The main reason for the proposal is that currently sewage is discharged directly into the sea. This does not meet international discharge standards. It also has a direct effect on the marine environment and the use of James Bay for swimming and tourist activities which may be a potential health hazard.

Diagram 4: The Proposed Layout



The drawings indicate that the proposed works would be mainly contained within the existing Sand Yard's blockwork walls/gates, albeit the plant will rise above the existing wall height and this part will be fully visible from public viewpoints. It is proposed to use suitable colours to help the structure blend in as much as possible with the cliff to its rear and it is proposed to plant a single tree to soften the appearance of the structure in views from Seaside/The Wharf.

Structures would be partly below ground level with two buildings, tanks and inlet works with the main section and inlet covered by concrete roofs.

Diagram 5: Sections

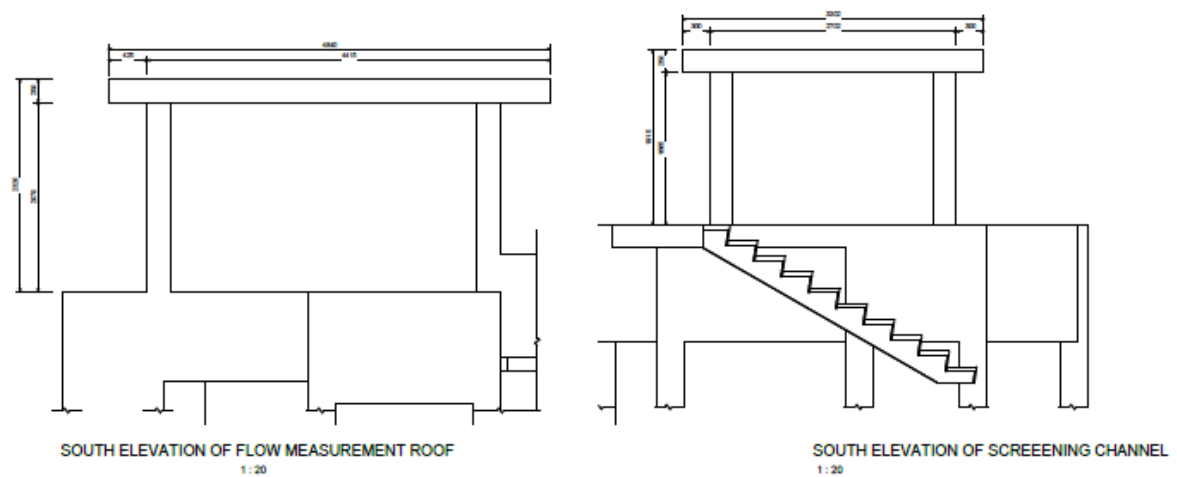


Diagram 6: 3D Render

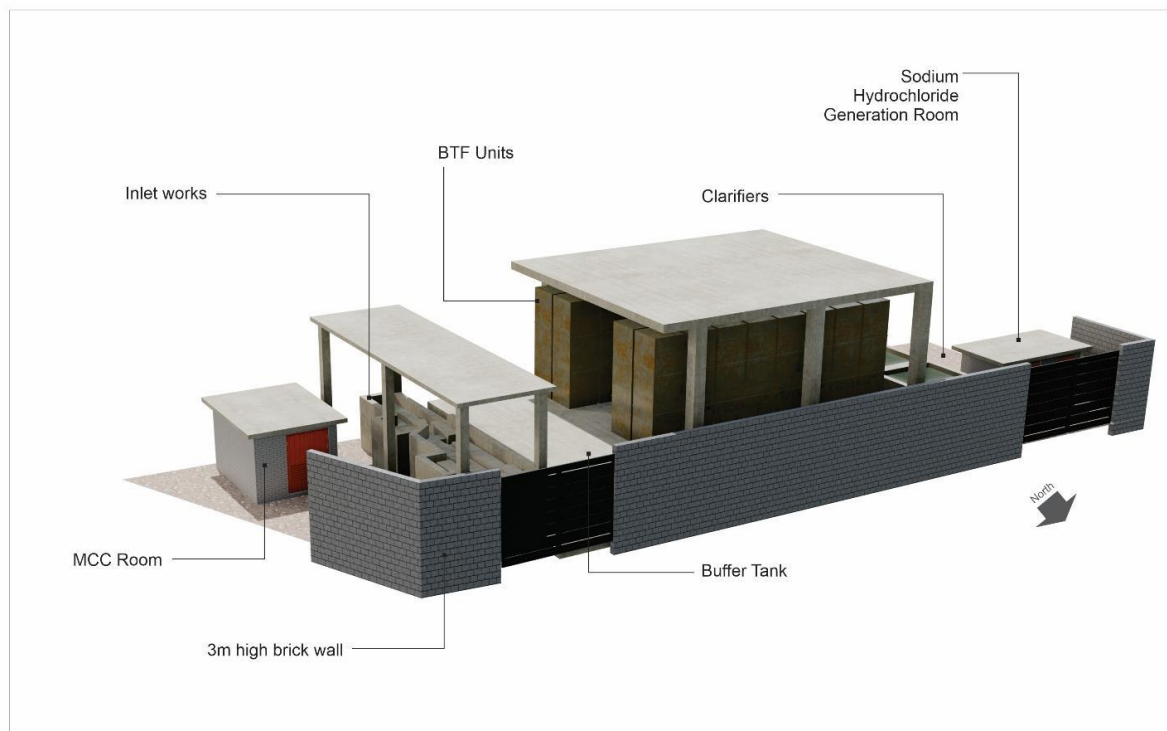


Diagram 7: Rendering of the proposed WWSW

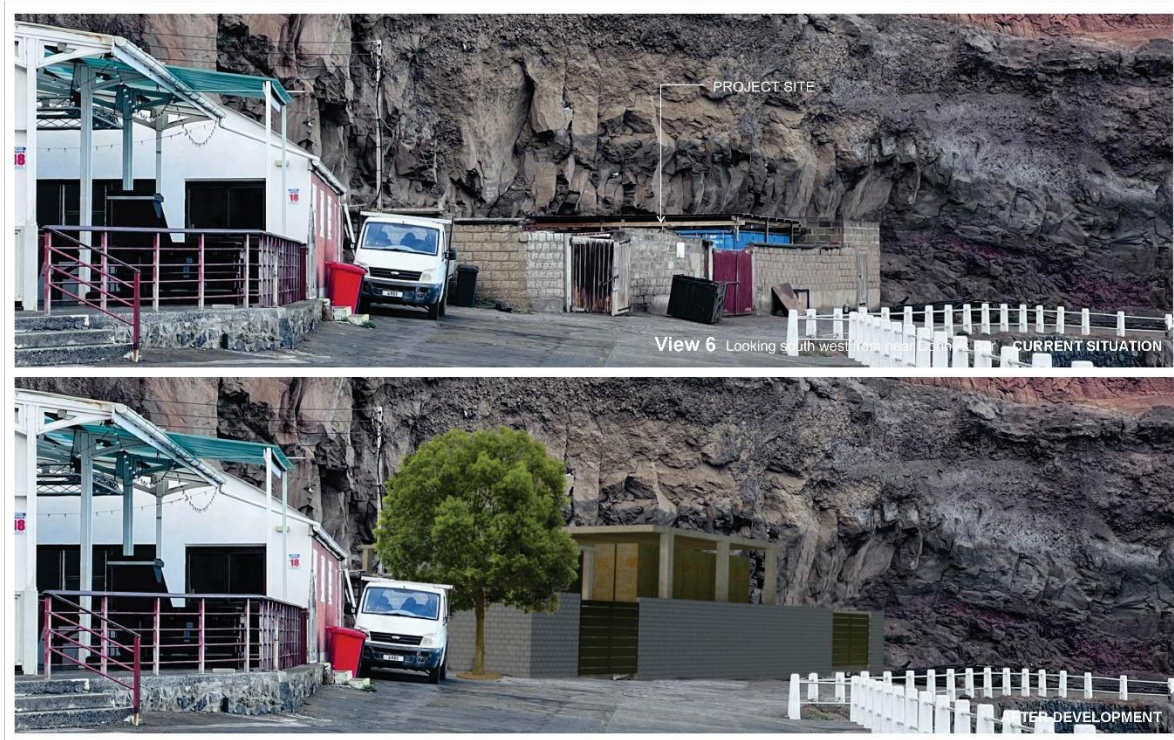
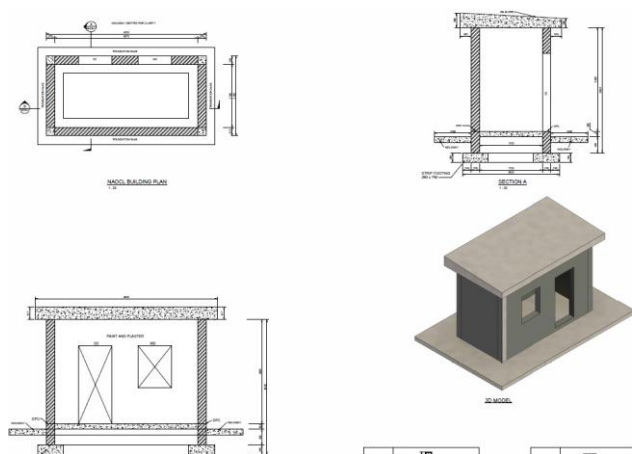
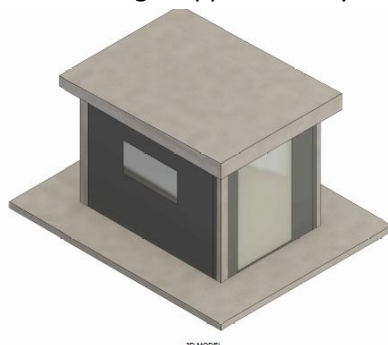


Diagram 8: The Buildings

THE NAOCL Building is4.3 x 2.15m by 2.35m high.



The MMC Building is approximately 4.4 x 3.3m by 3.15m



high

The main structure would rise above ground and existing wall levels level to a height of approximately 6.3m above ground level.

The applicant has also submitted the following supporting documents:

- Nature and Purpose of the proposed development and its possible effects on the Environment

The report confirms that the current system in JT is unsustainable and required urgent intervention.

The report goes on that while recent data shows a declining population, given recent changes such as opening of the airport in 2017 and the introduction of high-speed internet, that the data cannot be relied on to predict future trends and that a WWTW with a daily capacity of 220 cubic meters/day is needed. This, indicate the applicants, will reduce odours hydraulic overloading and environmental and public health risks associated with the current “straight into the sea” arrangements. The report concludes that the proposed development “*presents a sustainable and long-overdue solution to JT’s wastewater challenges, aligning with international effluent standards and supporting long-term community and environmental health.*”

- Fauna and Marine Impact Assessment (Revised)

This concludes that there is likely to be temporary, localised and effectively managed construction-related impacts. Also, that when the WWTW is in operation it would result in a net environmental benefit such that residual impacts on fauna and marine environment are assessed as low.

- Historic (Heritage) Impact Assessment (Revised)

This report concludes that, although a site visit was not undertaken, the history of the site is of a fuel depot, sand yard and limited other use. There are no fortifications on site, albeit that the walls are old, below the mainly blockwork. While the site is within the Heritage Coast Conservation Area, it sits well away from most listed assets and is “tucked away” at the bottom of the cliff behind modern buildings such as Donny’s (two-storey flat roof), The St Helena Coffee Shop and The Deck such that the report indicates that the proposed plant (with mitigation proposed) would have a limited impact on the historic asset in which it is located, or on heritage assets nearby. The report indicates that some drop finds may nonetheless be on site and works should include collecting and recording any finds.

- Landscape and Visual (Visual) Assessment (Revised)

The author of this report concludes that there is site sensitivity (low) but that the proposal should not be prevented, subject to a range of management/mitigation measures

- Construction/ Environment Management Plan (EMP)

The EMP concludes that there is a low environmental risk although usual management measures e.g. in relation to dust, noise and vibration, special waste, possible soil erosion should be applied

- Comments and Response Report

The applicants submitted a report on their pre-application public consultation.

There would be no additional sewerage from the proposed works. Storm-/rain-water will be conveyed into the storm bypass pipework.

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK & REPRESENTATIONS

There were no objections received from planning stakeholder. The following comments were noted:

HERITAGE SOCIETY: First Comments:

The Heritage Society welcomes this application for dealing effectively with Jamestown's sewage and storm water. The Society applauds the work of the consultants in its thoroughness and clarity of presentation, in particular the Heritage Impact Assessment, the EMP and the CEMP which should deal effectively with all reasonably foreseeable risks in both construction and operation.

The new structures will be visible above the existing sand-yard wall but they will be seen from almost all angles against the backdrop of the cliffs and, in relation to the scale of the cliffs, they will be relatively insignificant. Careful choice of colours of finishes, as suggested in the EMP, will help to ensure they are not significant.

Artificial lighting should be minimised and where it is necessary, the luminaires should be dark-skies compliant.

It is noted that the application has been submitted on forms referring to the 2008 Ordinance and this needs correcting to the current Land Planning and Development Control Ordinance to ensure that the proposals, including all environmental controls and mitigations, are fully enforceable.

HERITAGE SOCIETY – second comments:

In respect of 2026/28, Ms Coyle emailed me on 16th March to the effect that the content of the application has not changed, it has simply been resubmitted on the correct form, and no further response is required.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Economic development have no issue with this application.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (ENRP – EP):

The proposed Jamestown Wastewater Treatment Works will significantly improve the management and disposal of sewage in the Jamestown area and reduce adverse environmental impacts. Currently raw sewage goes directly into the sea via an outfall at West Rocks impacting directly on the marine environment and adversely affecting water quality. The proposed works will result in only the treated waste water being discharged into the sea which will have a reduced adverse impact on the marine environment.

A screening and scoping opinion had been issued for this development and it had been determined that an EIA Report was not required. However a fauna and marine impact assessment was requested and this was included in the applicant's submission, along with a Historic Impact Assessment, Landscape and visual impact analysis and a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

My review on the individual documents is as follows, page references in []:

Fauna and Marine Impact Assessment

Overall the impact identification and assessment covers all relevant issues and the recommended mitigation measures are appropriate.

The following errors are noted in the identification of faunal species – the inclusion of the wirebird “which may occasionally forage in disturbed open areas adjacent to the wharf” [Pg 14, bullet point 1] is incorrect. A further note below Table 4.1 states that the wirebird does not occur in Jamestown and can be scoped out. However to avoid confusion references to the wirebird should be removed. There is also a reference to gulls [bullet point 3] which are not found here. Perhaps the author meant fairy tern (*Gygis alba*) which isn't included in Table 4.1 and is a protected species that is found around the wharf area.

Heritage Impact Assessment

This was a desk based assessment using information supplied by staff at the Museum. It includes an assessment of heritage impact and significance. The reference to the sand yard being in the coastal zone conservation area [Pg 16] should be amended to reflect that this is in both the coastal zone and the Heritage Coast Conservation Area. The Chance Find Protocol – Heritage Resource

should be updated to reflect and follow local processes. The current version follows South African Legislation and processes which are not relevant on St Helena.

Visual Impact

This identifies and assesses appropriate view points and identifies appropriate mitigation.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been produced, but it is not clear if this is intended to be a CEMP or an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) as both terms are used in the document. An EMP would capture all mitigation measures identified in the impact reports and provide a clear auditable framework for the management of environmental risks and impacts during the construction and operation of the development. A CEMP should include more detail on how the mitigation will be done. I would therefore have expected the body of this CEMP to include how the recommended mitigation measures would be implemented, Table 10.1 Compliance Checklist [Pg 21] addresses this somewhat but does not include all measures identified in the assessment reports and is not sufficiently detailed on how the mitigation will be done. The list of additional required impact management measures in section 12 [Pg 23] should be included as well.

I would recommend that the CEMP is updated to include the detail as referenced above and any relevant conditions from the Decision Notice. The CEMP should then be submitted for approval prior to the start of project works.

Environmental Protection 2nd comments:

- My comments on the Fauna and Marine Impact Assessment were addressed with the incorrect references removed.
- For the Heritage Impact Assessment, although the date on this document has changed it doesn't appear to have been updated and my comments were not addressed so therefore still stand.
- For the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), it looks as though the references to EMP have been removed, however the document itself has not been updated and as per my previous comments does not provide the level of detail I would look for in a CEMP. That said however, I do not see this as an issue at this stage as the CEMP should be further developed following the grant of development permission and issue of the decision notice (so that the detail on meeting any relevant conditions can be included) and the appointment of a contractor (so they can include the detail of how they will address the environmental issues and implement mitigation measures). The requirement for an updated CEMP to be submitted and approved prior to the start of project works should therefore be included as a condition on the decision notice.

Also, although I did not ask for a 'view from the sea' for this application (I did for the HTH one) the applicant has included this. The development is visually more prominent due to its height above the wall, than I thought it would be.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

The proposed development would address existing concerns relating to seawater quality and the current discharge of raw sewage into the marine environment. In principle, Environmental Health acknowledges the public health and environmental benefits of upgrading wastewater treatment infrastructure, and there are no immediate concerns with the proposed treatment design itself. Mitigation measures have been identified by the applicant in relation to odour, dust, and the nearby heritage site.

However, from an Environmental Health and Public Health perspective, there remain significant concerns regarding the suitability of the proposed site.

The application site is located in close proximity to existing food premises, including Donny's Club and nearby café premises, mobile vendors as well as potential future development associated with seawater desalination for potable use. In addition, there are indications that the wider wharf area may be subject to future tourism-led development. The compatibility of a wastewater treatment works with these sensitive receptors raises concerns in terms of amenity, perception, and long-term land-use planning.

Submitted documentation outlines odour control measures at the raw sewage inlet, including enclosure, air extraction, and odour scrubbing to control odour-causing substances released through turbulence. Whilst the understanding that such systems are commonly used, this system will be relatively new to St Helena which in turn means that without experience of operational evidence specific to this site and context, it is difficult to be confident that odour impacts would be fully controlled in practice.

Furthermore, it is of the understanding that chemicals will be used to suppress neutralize odour to mitigate the immediate nuisance, but it would be interesting to know whether the use of such will have further impact on the environment and safety of airborne fumes.

Also given the surrounding environmental conditions, including high cliffs that overhang the treatment plant area, it is challenging to determine whether there may be occasions when odours could linger or be trapped, potentially affecting nearby premises and users of the area. In essence the local topography, may influence airflow and dispersion patterns.

At the time writing Environmental health has no knowledge of any locally adopted or nationally prescribed minimum separation distance between wastewater treatment

facilities and sensitive receptors, including domestic properties and food premises'. However it is noted from research that , guidance from other public-health regulators and land-use planning authorities commonly applies separation distances of approximately 90–100 metres or greater to protect amenity and public health, particularly in relation to odour and bio aerosols. Therefore, Environmental Health is unable to conclude that the proposed development, even with the stated mitigation measures, would be socially acceptable or would not give rise to future amenity or public health concerns. Environmental health is also not certain if a social impact study would be necessary to further justify the location.

In the absence of equivalent local guidance, Environmental Health considers distance and land-use compatibility to remain a material planning consideration.

Conclusion

Environmental Health raises no objection to the principle of improved wastewater treatment; however, concerns remain regarding site selection, proximity to sensitive uses, and the uncertainty surrounding odour impacts in this specific setting. These matters should be carefully considered by the Planning Authority when determining the application, and further justification or reassurance may be required to demonstrate that the location is appropriate and operations can be maintained in both the short and long term.

[OFFICER COMMENT: Social Impact Assessments (SIA) can show how a proposal would provide social value/benefits. There is no specific requirement to submit a SIA on St Helena. Assessment of the social benefit is considered in the assessment section below.]

There were 2 representations/objections received from members of the public, as follows:

Objector #1 (signed by three signatories):

I write in connection with the above project because I'm the owner of property in close proximity with the Sand Yard. This missive includes the concern of Mrs Jill Bolton and Mr Donny Stevens, who have businesses in that area too. These premises produce food, which is sold to the Public. We all are extremely worried about odour, raw sewerage and other issues that could occur. (My building would obviously decrease in value.) Therefore, we strongly/vehemently object to this Application.

It is fully understood that raw sewerage goes straight into the sea so improvement to the Jamestown system is long overdue. However, should the designers get it wrong the proposed location could adversely affect the entire amenities in the area, especially Donny's Bar and The Coffee Shop and others in the vicinity.

Therefore, could the following be answered -

- Have alternative sites been looked at? Why not set the location at West Rocks itself, which is closer to the present outlet*
- Regarding the location of the proposed sewerage plant - how close (in metres) is it to the public premises and is there a legal distance and what is it?*
- Regarding mitigation - will the public be adversely affected by this installation, especially in close space to the Mule Yard, Coffee Shop and Donny's Bar amenities?*
- How often will the sewerage plant be de-sludge?*
- Do you have mitigation plans in place? Is it possible to have sight of the mitigation in place for installation and the operations of the sewerage plant?*
- Assuming the sewerage plant will require venting, will the odours venting into the air cause a nuisance to nearby premises and public amenities?*

These are grave matters for consideration before going ahead with this Project.

Objector #2 Comments:

On 27.3.26:

These two projects conclude their 14-day public consultation period today, but at no time have there been any building plans available to enable proper assessment of the full extent of the projects, or to make reasonable representations about them, except that there are still no drawings.

Why have these two huge projects, that are likely to have major environmental impacts in a conservation area, been allowed to proceed without drawings to enable proper understanding?

Both applications were registered as complete applications by the planning office which seems to be contrary to the Regulations because the obligatory detailed drawings were absent. Perhaps that renders them both, null and void. Nevertheless, without adequate drawings, both those incomplete applications were then advertised for public comment over the 14-day period.

It should not be for the public to be forced into deciphering incomplete applications. Surely, it should be for the applicant and CPO to ensure applications are understandable to the public. Is that not the purpose of a development application in the first place?

I drew attention to the CPO about the absence of drawings. The HTH application was later re-advertised for a further 14-day period with revised drawings. However, there were still no drawings. Again, when brought to the attention of the CPO, no drawings were forthcoming.

The applications contain Heritage Impact Assessments, Visual Impact Assessments and Flora, Fauna and Marine Impact Assessments which are extensive documents that ostensibly form part of an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA). However, it is completely ambiguous as to whether this is a formal EIA or not. There seems to be no Scoping Opinion in the application, and the Chief Planning Officer has not given the mandatory minimum 28-day public consultation period required in planning law for an EIA. How was the public expected to respond?

On the face of it, this project has appeared to have been subject to extensive consultation by the applicant, being the St Helena Government, and that exercised by the CPO, but in fact there has been no meaningful public consultations at all, because there has been no detailed scheme to consider.

The Comments and Response Reports in the applications show that consultee comments have not been properly recorded nor have the project leader responses been assessed by consultees for their adequacy. For instance, at the Canister on 11 December I asked where the consultation drawings were, because there were none. There was no adequate reply. Those comments are not recorded in the Report. Therefore, it did not appear to have been a meaningful consultation.

Overall, the processes relating to these applications seems not to have followed the rights of the people of St Helena to be involved in the governance and the future of their own island. Therefore, it does not reflect well on the St Helena Government or the British Government, supposedly the project's financial backers, as both should have been seen to be upholding the people's democratic rights.

As such, these two applications should be condemned as null and void as they do not appear to comply with the Land Planning and Development Control (General) Regulations, 2013, Part 2, Regulations 2(2)(a) and (b) and 2(3). That is,

2(2)(a), that 1:100 scale drawings indicated on the application forms to be included in the applications were not included.

2(2)(b), that the requirement to provide 'building plans... showing the full extent of the development intended to be carried out' has not been met, because there are no proper drawings; and

2(3), that the application should only have been registered when the planning officer was satisfied that all the documents required had been submitted. Clearly these applications were registered without all the documents, as the 1:100 scale drawings for 2(2)(a), were not included.

Furthermore, Regulation 2(1) and Section 18 of the Ordinance, make it clear that the above regulations must be satisfied before any application is submitted to the Authority. Therefore, may I be assured that these applications will not be progressed any further, until their present conditions as outlined above are resolved.

And on 16.4.26:

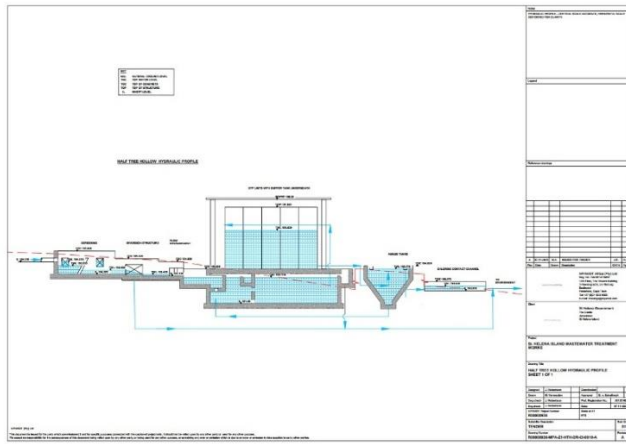
Thank you for your comprehensive email of 10 April. However, I continue to stand by everything I said in my email of 27 March.

There are many environmental issues relating to both these sites as they are in Historic Conservation Areas. Therefore they both need proper assessment. However we cannot get started because of the inadequacy of the drawings submitted. For example at part 18 of the application form the applicant, the St Helena Government, has ticked the box saying:

"Please confirm the plans submitted with this application:

Building plans at scale 1:100 or larger showing floor plans of each storey, all elevations and section."

But at no time has the applicant submitted those plans for either the HTH or the Jamestown applications, and although some drawings may appear to comply, they do not. For example the drawing below.



Dwg No: 2026_11_MPA-Z1-HTH-DR-CI-0010 Hydraulic Profile

The scale of this drawing is given at the bottom of the title block on the right hand side. It says, "Scale at A1 – NTS". NTS is the standard abbreviation for Not to Scale. It is not a 1:100 scale drawing.

Therefore the applicant has not provided the drawings they confirmed were included in the application form, neither are there any elevational drawings.

These are not minor issues but fundamental requirements for the proper operation of the planning process, and the same situation applies to both applications 2026/11 and 2026/28.

If an application is approved then the accurate scale drawings are date-stamped to form a contract where if built it must comply with those measured drawings. If those drawings are not accurate then something else may be built but there will be no way to do anything about it. Isn't that what Land Development Control, the LDCP and LDCA is all about? Inaccurate drawings such those submitted by the St Helena Government subvert that control.

Why have these St Helena Government applications been registered and taken forward as complete applications when they are nothing of the sort?

[Officer comment: The applicants originally filled in the application form showing that they had submitted all the plans necessary. The Planning Office apologises for not ensuring that all the plans indicated on the application were submitted in the first instance prior to starting public consultation. This was rectified quickly and a further round of public consultation was undertaken. Plans are required to be 1:100 or larger in scale; plans were submitted at a larger scale which meets the requirements, albeit not specifically at the minimum 1:100 scale. Following the first two rounds of public consultation and discussions with the Planning Office, the applicants responded to

comments made and provided revised plans and revised documentation; this has been the subject of a third round of consultation.]

Objector #3 (late) Comments:

I would like to raise a concern regarding the proposed sewage treatment plant and its potential impact on the nearby desalination facility that has already received planning approval.

My understanding is that the sewage treatment proposal relies on chlorine-based disinfection and does not include an offshore outfall pipe to discharge treated water further into the ocean. This raises concerns about the possibility of residual chlorine or chlorinated compounds remaining in the discharged water and entering the local marine environment.

Even very small concentrations of chlorine can have significant consequences for reverse osmosis (RO) desalination systems. RO membranes are highly sensitive to chlorine exposure, and trace amounts can cause irreversible membrane degradation and leading to substantial replacement costs.

I am not opposed to wastewater treatment; however, I believe the interaction between these two critical water infrastructure projects must be fully evaluated before any approval is granted.

This potential conflict would be easily solved if the wastewater treatment has a offshore fall out away from James bay.

[Officer comment: It is for the LDCA Members to decide whether to consider late objections, i.e., those received outside the consultation period(s). Notwithstanding, the comments were forwarded to the relevant Planning Stakeholder, Environmental Management. The Chief Environmental Officer has responded that this is a very specialist area of work for which the Environmental Management section do not have the necessary resources to either confirm or refute the concerns raised by the objector. The desalination plant is required to prove it can provide potable water; the concern raised suggests that there may be additional costs to the developer if this current application is approved; the proposed alternative suggested is untested.

The applicants were contacted and have responded that the likely amount of chlorine entering the sea is very limited and it would also be difficult to discern whether chlorine possibly impacting the desalination plant relates to the proposed Wastewater Treatment Plant or to the Swimming Pool which also has a chlorinated water outflow into James Bay].

LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The relevant policies of the Land Development Control Plan (LDCP 2012) that are applicable in the assessment of the proposed development area set out below:

- Intermediate Zone: IZ1, IZ4
- Sewerage and Storm Drainage: SD1, SD.5
- Built Heritage: BH1, BH.2, BH.5
- Natural Heritage: NH1, NH.2, NH.3
- Roads and Transport: RT1, RT.7
- Environmental Impact Assessment requirements

While details are provided in individual policies, the LDCP Principles should also be borne in mind which are as follows:

“1) Whilst protecting absolutely the critical natural habitats and conserving the built heritage;

1.1) to enable and facilitate air access to the island;

1.2) to encourage and enable well located tourist facilities primarily based on the island’s natural and historic heritage;

1.3) to provide for and enable well located housing development, including for domestic demand;

*1.4) **to provide for** and enable appropriately sited business, employment, cultural, recreational and social facilities **and appropriate infrastructure.***

2) To conserve and manage the natural heritage and built heritage of the island to benefit tourism and the island community.”

PLANNING OFFICER’S ASSESSMENT

Principle of development

Provision of infrastructure

SD1: Primary Policy reads *“a) Development permission will be granted for the construction of facilities for the treatment and disposal of foul sewage appropriate to the island's development needs.”*

Policy SD.5 specifically identifies Jamestown as a location which should be provided with a Sewerage Treatment system/or extended outfall for the Jamestown main sewer.

The LDCP, 2012 (i.e., 14 years ago) at para. 13.6 states *“Within James Bay... the current crude effluent discharges to the sea are plainly unacceptable in the context of a developing a tourist industry and the higher standards and extra demand that this*

implies. Policies provide for addressing this issue.” does not specifically identify that Jamestown Half Tree Hollow requires a sewerage treatment plant.”

Notwithstanding while the population has fallen overall across the Island and Jamestown has seen a fall in population, the Capital City continues to provide the main high level “town centre uses” and government administration facilities such as the Governor’s Office and Government Offices, shops, the main Bank, Insurance and Parcel delivery services, The Library, The Museum, the Prison and evening and night-time facilities such as restaurants, takeaways, pop-up food facilities, public houses and bars and the Night Club, Donny’s, as well as hotel accommodation at the Mantis, The Consulate and Blue Lantern with other B&Bs. There has been no significant fall in the number of inlets to the sewerage system. The current system is not able to accommodate current development but more development is coming forward, which includes more flatted accommodation, increased businesses including pop-ups which encourage more people to the evening/night-time economy and the proposed redevelopment of The Wharf into a more attractive all-day activity area whereby this infrastructure is needed, not least because the current arrangements are below international standards for processing the town’s sewage.

The need for additional infrastructure for Jamestown was identified in the LDCP in 2012; in 2017 a combined sewage treatment system for both JT and HTH was approved in outline which accords with Policy SD1 in principle. The need was accepted in 2017 in principle under the outline approval, albeit though a combined Plant for both Half Tree Hollow and Jamestown. As the approved Development did not proceed to full Development Application stage, no proposal has been brought forward or implemented. This need, while recognised, has not been addressed in the intervening period and this application has now been submitted by SHG EDIP (rather than the Utility operator) to meet this identified need.

The proposal requests the same form of development – a sewerage treatment plant – in the same location to that of the 2016/137 submission for Jamestown which was only not allowed as a separate system in favour of the combined outline proposal which was considered to be more sustainable than the two WWTPs. While a separate application (2026/11) has also been submitted which is for a separate WWTW in Half Tree Hollow near The Guns (as per the previous application 2016/136), there is no third combination option offered this time. It would not be reasonable to refuse permission in favour of a non-existent alternative, particularly in light of the reasons the combined option did not come forward nearly 10 years ago.

The previous turning away of the individual HTH and JT submissions was based on there being an alternative combined scheme, however the joint submission included parts of the separate JT submission including a Treatment Plant at the Sand Yard. It should be noted that there was no reason for refusal relating to possible impact on the Historic Context or on the grounds that the proposal was not otherwise acceptable

in principle, including its impact on Donny's and other commercial uses that were operating in 2016/2017. Or have been provided since then in the knowledge that the Sand Yard had been identified in the 2012 Land Development Control Plan.

The proposal submitted does not address why a combined option has not been put forward, only that separate WWTWs are being proposed. It is understood that it may have been that the proposed large sewage pipes adjacent to the Tourist landmark of Jacobs Ladder were not universally supported. Either way, there is no alternative to consider in providing JT with much needed infrastructure.

The applicants have considered alternative locations within Jamestown, however they have all been discounted on various grounds including that they are privately owned, would be higher up in town which would affect more residential occupiers or would require higher maintenance/cost, including additional pumps. The application site is the applicant's preferred location to provide a mainly gravity-fed solution to the identified problems. It is also on the same site as approved in 2017.

The proposal would accord with Policy SD.1 and Policy SD.5 as it would provide infrastructure to meet an identified need. It is not therefore considered that the proposal would be a departure from the LDCP, nor was it previously (in 2017) under the same LDCP considered to be a departure.

While the LDCP indicates that there is an "absolute" ***requirement to conserve the Island's built heritage*** and it is recognised that the proposal would have an impact on the setting of historic assets nearby and as it would be located within the Heritage Coast Historic Conservation Area, notwithstanding, this Principle of the LDCP does allow for infrastructure development such that it is not automatic that an impact on either the Historic Assets or their setting or the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area would result the proposal being unacceptable in principle. The details of the proposal will be considered below.

In addition, the proposal is in the Intermediate Zone, and in line with Primary Policy IZ1, there is a presumption in favour of development including infrastructure providing in National Conservation Areas, the development complies with any Management Plan and if it incorporates a historic structure, that the development includes conservation of that structure. While no National Conservation Management Plan has been adopted as a "Development Plan" in the intervening period, consideration of the impact on heritage assets is given below but in principle, the proposal would meet this Primary Policy and Sewerage policies.

In line with the above, the proposal for a Waste Water Treatment Works is therefore, on balance, considered to be acceptable in principle.

Impact of the details of the proposal

Impact on the Historic Coast Conservation Area and the setting of historic assets:

Primary Policy BH1 a) states that *“Development which encourages, supports and includes conservation of historic structures and their setting, including listed buildings, monuments and fortifications and related artifacts, will be permitted with appropriate requirements, including planning gain, to secure such conservation.”* With BH1 b) specifically indicating where it does not *“comply with the Management Plan of the Historic Conservation Area”* it will *“not be permitted”*. And BH1 c) states that *“Development in Historic Conservation Areas will be permitted only if it enhances and protects the character of the Area by reference to scale, proportion, details and external materials of the proposed development in relation to those of the Historic Conservation Area.”*

Appendix 3 of the LDCP states that the Heritage Coast Historic Conservation Area is *“A heavily fortified area of steep sea cliffs that is one of the most concise and complete defended coast lines in the world and is the most complete East India Company defensive network demonstrating excellent examples of developments in military theory.”*

There is no Management Plan for the Historic Conservation Area such that development should not be permitted if it does not align with it. Appendix 3 of the LDCP does indicate in terms of management of the HCA that its Rationale for management: *“Will be linked to the Historic Environment Record”*. The Historic Environment Record, as dated at 2012 and 2021, indicates that the sea defences, including the Glacis and moated area, are historic assets. It does need to be noted that the HER does not appear to have been formally adopted for the purposes of use in development control decision-making (i.e., does not appear to have been approved as a formal Development Plan under S39/S13 of the LDCP Ordinance, 2013). Work on the HER has been with St Helena National Trust which indicates that this work is on-going and therefore not yet complete.

There are Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the application site within the Conservation Area including The Fortifications Grade I (Monument) – outstanding group value , The Town Gate, Terrace Wall and Terrace – Grade II – outstanding group value - The Castle Grade 1 – outstanding group value, for example.

It is quite clear from the proposal submitted that the proposed development would be a modern addition in modern materials and with a character and appearance which is not in accordance with the character and appearance of the Historic Conservation Area, the Heritage Coast Historic Conservation Area. There has been little attempt to be subtle in providing a modern piece of engineering to provide a modern engineering solution to an identified need for modern infrastructure for a society which cannot

grow without this modern intervention. Unlike the original proposal for HTH, the Sand Yard does have existing walling to its boundaries (which could be restored/elevated) which would provide a degree of screening, however, the plant would be significantly taller than the current walling such that only the lower parts would be screened. The Applicant's Landscape Impact Assessment report suggests that a single tree could be planted to screen/soften the impact in views from the east (i.e. Seaside/The Wharf), however, the tree will take time to establish (providing it does do so in this position close to the sea/waves/sea spray), would be alone such that it would only screen a small part of the plant proposed and, again, is unlikely to be the full height of the plant, even if mature. It is also proposed that the tree would be located where the current electricity pole and stays are located such that both branches and roots are likely to impact on this existing infrastructure.

The proposal does not seek to provide a Sir Joseph Bazalgette-style Victorian sewerage solution in fancy brick and ironwork but would provide a complete contrast to the historic assets which are located mainly to the east/south of the application site within the Conservation Area, within which the application site is also located.

The proposal's non-attempt to "fit in" can sometimes be a benefit in that it is neither pastiche nor bowing to past times. The question then is whether a proposal which provides more modern technology should be back-dated to completely fit in in a Conservation Area (CA) when this part of the Conservation Area which is industrial in nature, i.e. take on a cloak of compatibility.

While the proposal would be "out of character" with the majority of the historic assets, newer development such as 2-storey Donny's Nightclub, and one storey St Helena Coffee shop and The (raised) Deck which lie in close proximity to the application site in advance of the Glacis wall and there are converted containers with staging at The Mule Yard, also in advance of the Glacis, this development would be screened from the earlier historic assets mainly by Donny's itself and would not screen any historic assets from views in James Bay, only the lower part of the natural cliff wall, which the current Sand Yard wall already partly screens.

As such, the proposed development would not directly compete with the older structures, is not trying to hide itself and is far enough away from the older (early 20th Century structures) as to not physically touch or extend from them, in particular The Glacis, the Bridge, The Arch and historic buildings in the Grand Parade. As such, the proposal does not seek to interfere with any historic structures or their settings.

The Historic Society makes no objections but has commented that "The new structures will be visible above the existing sand-yard wall but they will be seen from almost all angles against the backdrop of the cliffs and, in relation to the scale of the cliffs, they will be relatively insignificant. Careful choice of colours of finishes, as suggested in the EMP, will help to ensure they are not significant.

The proposal does not specifically seek to preserve or otherwise encourage, support or conserve the surrounding historic structures etc. While this is more often applied when the structure forms part of the proposed development, for example, when the proposal is for an extension to the structure or there is a clear relationship between a development and a historic asset, there is no physical contact with these nearby structures and the impact to the setting of the structures may not be ameliorated by the provision of a larger enveloping structure in a more “period” exterior finish given its location.

Notwithstanding, for the above reasons, it is considered that the proposal would not result in any significant harm on the historic assets and, as such, in this case would not be contrary to Policy BH1.

Archaeology:

Given the previous uses of this area as part of the Jamestown Fortifications, over a long period of time, it is possible that small finds, dropped coins, buttons, pins etc. may be discovered during the proposed construction works. A suitable condition will be attached to require the provision of a suitably-qualified person to undertake a watching brief during the construction phase and for later recording of any finds in line with Policy BH 6. Of the LDCP.

Impact on Visual Amenities:

The development does include construction of new above ground structures and small buildings therefore the area would be affected with some additional visual impact on the landscape.

The applicant’s visual impact assessment clearly shows that the current proposal would be a roughly 1.5-storey height structure with concrete and steel being its main components.

The proposal would be visible from (public) sea views, in particular from James Bay, used as a boat park and by those walking along Seaside/The Wharf and climbing Jacobs Ladder, using the elevated car park at the rear of The Museum and also those walking to West Rocks, including tourists and visitors. However, from most viewpoints, the plant will be seen against the backdrop of the steep cliff. Suitable use of materials and colours would help the proposal to blend more into this backdrop. Apart from further out at sea, other views of the proposed plant from within Grand Parade and Jamestown southwards would be limited.

Some harm is therefore identified to visual amenities in the locality from the proposed development. This could be ameliorated by the use of suitable colour application and some soft landscaping, however, there is limited scope for soft landscaping.

Impact on Amenities:

There are no residential properties located within the Seaside/The Wharf or Grand Parade, therefore the impact on residential amenities at some distance would be very limited.

There have been objections received on the grounds of noise, smell or other air pollution from those businesses operating nearest the application site including Donny's/Get Carters, St Helena Coffee Shop/The Deck and The Mule Yard.

Environmental Health have indicated that there is no specific distance a sewerage treatment plant has to be from more sensitive receptors such as residential properties and food/drink establishments. However, Environmental Health does not raise any objections in principle which it sees as addressing other health issues, it concludes asking whether the proposed development, even with the stated mitigation measures, would be socially acceptable or would not give rise to future amenity or public health concerns. Environmental Health therefore conclude that concerns remain regarding site selection, proximity to sensitive uses, and the uncertainty surrounding odour impacts in this specific setting.

Environmental health is also not certain if a social impact study would be necessary to further justify the location. Whether or not the provision of a sewerage treatment plant is socially acceptable is considered below. Social value or social benefits of any development is separate to impact on amenities.

The applicants have advised that in normal use the enclosed nature of the proposed tanks would prevent smells from being emitted. However, during cleaning and in the case of products being sent through the sewerage system, there would be a period when smells would be released. The applicants indicate that they would therefore undertake cleaning and non-waste products removal at times when local business do not operate, i.e., early morning or late evening and weekends. This can be controlled by a suitably-worded condition attached to any approval.

On the above basis, while there would be occasions when there would be some odour and possible bio release, it must be taken into consideration that the proposal would be in line with the outline approval at this site and that the site has already been considered to be acceptable both in principle and in relation to the previous approval which is in line with 2012 LDCP Policies. It has therefore already been considered that the Sand Yard is the most appropriate site, even if there are existing commercial uses nearby. It is recognised that the proposal will result in the emission of some smells but this is limited and would be controlled.

On the basis of the expert advice and previous acceptance in principle, it is considered that on balance, this location is acceptable and that the emissions could be suitably controlled. The Environmental Health Officer has asked for more assurance and it is appropriate that further documentation is provided to this end, via a suitably worded condition.

Impact on Flora and Fauna:

The applicant's submission indicates that flora and fauna will not be significantly affected by the proposal, including that in the marine environment, in fact that the proposal will result in some benefits.

The Chief Environmental Officer commented on the revised submission that this has addressed the issues raised previously with regard to inaccuracies and is acceptable.

It is considered that the proposal would accord with Policy NH1 and NH.2 of the LDCP.

Access/parking and traffic:

There is already an access road. No parking would be provided within the application site, as existing. Turning into the site is possible. There are no specific parking standards for structures and the buildings are both small. It is considered that the proposed arrangements for parking/loading would be acceptable for the proposed use.

The Road Section have raised no concerns. It is considered that the proposal would therefore accord with Policies RT1 and RT.7 of the LDCP.

Social Impact:

It is recognised that should jobs be lost at business premises nearby, then this would have an adverse social impact, however, there is no indication that there would be any loss of business/loss of jobs as a result of the proposed wastewater treatment works. Especially as The Wharf Renewal Project progresses and business move along Seaside/The Wharf in future which should increase (if needed, replace) jobs in similar industries.

There would be a social benefit in that the proposal would provide infrastructure which will support the local population with infrastructure which meets UK and other international minimum standards for dealing with sewage, improving community health and wellbeing in the long term.

It would also improve the marine environment which currently receives raw sewage and other materials sent down the sewerage pipes to the benefit of swimmers, divers, fishers and tour operators which would also be a economic benefit to tourism. This could result in an increase in local jobs in this sector as well as healthier water in which to swim.

Conclusion:

The proposed development of a Waste-Water Treatment Plan (or WWTW) in this location is supported by the relevant infrastructure policies of the Land Development Control Plan, 2012 where a clear need has been identified. The provision of a communal, public waste-water/sewerage treatment facility which will meet the required sewerage standards (which the current arrangements do not) would provide a significant public benefit for the long-term future of Jamestown, the Capital of St Helena Island, the seat of Government and main high-level centre.

There would be limited impacts on visual amenities and on other amenities of nearby occupiers and businesses. The existing roads can accommodate expected traffic during construction and the operational phase.

The proposal would meet the policies of the LDCP 2012 relating to the provision of infrastructure in the Intermediate Zone and that, taking into account that material considerations do have to be considered which point to the proposal being the most sustainable option for Jamestown, the proposal is in line with Intermediate Zone policies.

The proposal would, due to the siting, scale and appearance of the utility facility, result in some harm to the character and appearance of the Heritage Coast Historic Conservation Area, however, this is very limited on this existing industrial site (subject to conditions requiring the provision of suitable colours to blend in as much as possible) and would therefore not be contrary to the Primary Built Heritage policy BH1 of the LDCP.

LDCA Members, as decision-makers, will need to place their own weight on the matters raised and decide whether the planning balance falls in favour or against the development as currently submitted prior to advising on their recommendation.