

Planning Officer's Report - LDCA FEBRUARY 2021

APPLICATION	2020/77 – Proposed Construction of a Prefabricated Steel Building for Drainage Depot including minor Earthworks for access and construction of the base slab and also a vehicle turning area.
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Permission in Full
REGISTERED	2 nd October 2020
APPLICANT	Connect St Helena Ltd
PARCEL	FP0468
SIZE	2.84 (1.116ha)
LAND OWNER	Crown Estates
LOCALITY	Red Hill Treatment Plant Work Site
ZONE	Intermediate Zone
CONSERVATION AREA	None
CURRENT USE	Treatment Plant Work Site
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Independent Newspaper on 9th October 2020▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	23 th October 2020
REPRESENTATIONS	None Received
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Water Division	Applicant
2. Sewage Division	Applicant
3. Energy Division	Applicant
4. Fire & Rescue	No Response
5. Roads Section	No Response
6. Property Division	No Response
7. Environmental Management	No Response

8. Public Health	No Response
9. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
10. St Helena Police Services	Not Consulted
11. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Consulted
12. Enterprise St Helena (ESH)	No Objection
13. National Trust	No Response
14. Heritage Society	Objection - Comment

B. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS SUMMARY (approximate / rounded figures)

Proposed Store & Warehouse Footprint	:	220m ²
Apex Height	:	5.3m
Eaves Height	:	4m

C. BACKGROUND

The LDCA Members discussed the proposed development at its meeting on 4th November 2020 and 13th January 2021 meeting and deferred decision on the development application as they had reservations on details of the site layout and impact on the landscape. Following the earlier meeting in November they also had a site visit on 9th November to view the impact of the proposed development and further assess the capacity of the Depot operation in terms of the various uses and its operation land. The reports of the January 2021 and November 2020 meetings are attached as Annex A and Annex B respectively to this report.

At the January meeting, the issues raised the exact siting and dimensions of the platform for the construction of the building and the vehicular access to the area and the potential for landscaping. There was also a continuing concern that part of the development was within the Green Heartland Zone and therefore against the Zone policy. The applicant has provided further revised plans to show how the building would site on the site and the access into the area of development and how the potential visual impact of the building on the landscape can be minimised.

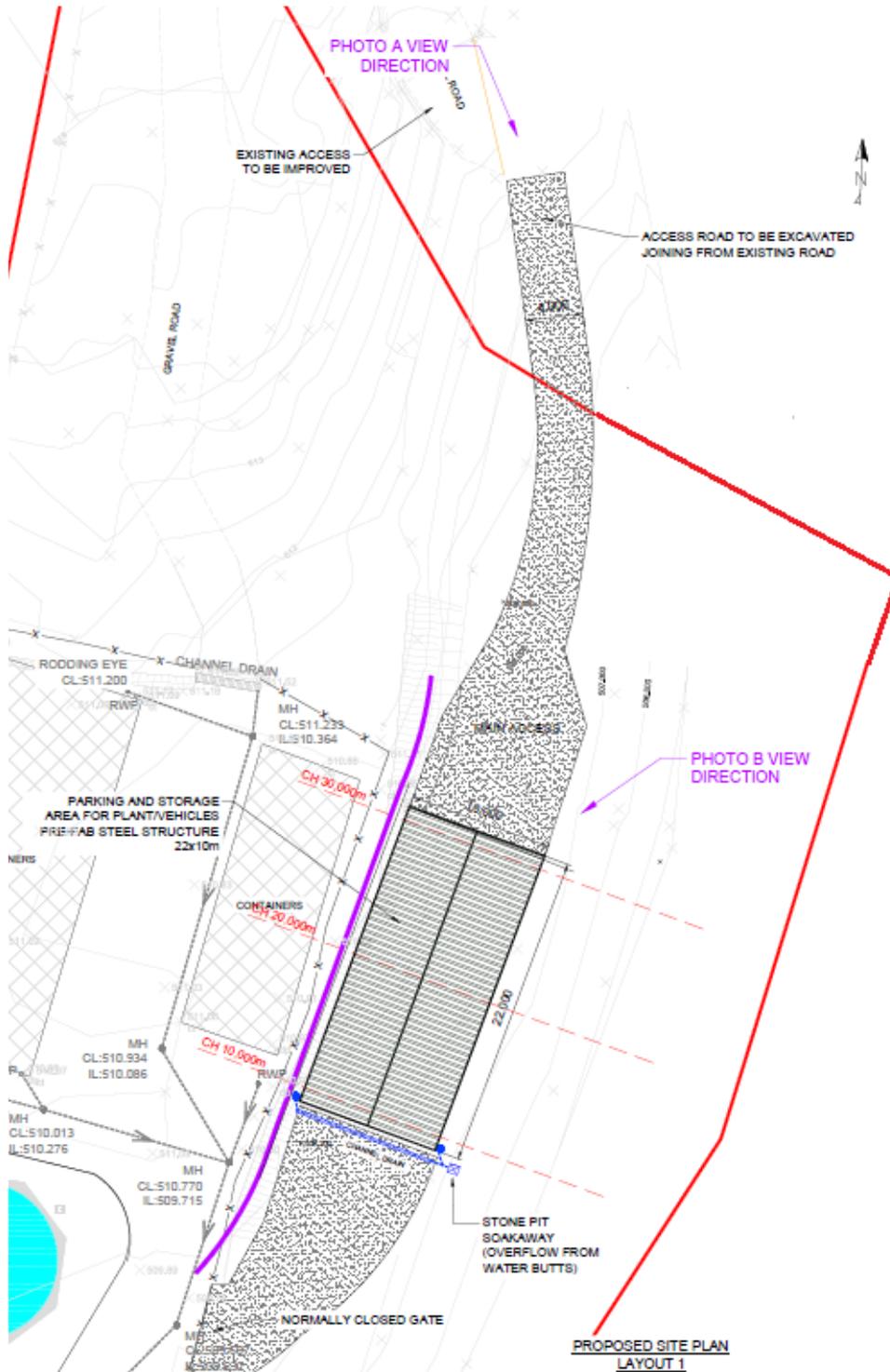
The development site is within the Redhill Treatment Plant, and falls within the Intermediate Zone with no conservation area restrictions. The depot site abuts the Green Heartland Zone on its eastern boundary. This main depot area contains number of buildings, storage containers, water tanks, open storage areas and vehicle parking related to the utilities operations of Connect.

REVISED DETAILS

The revised details now building being moved closer to the western side fence against the existing containers. The vehicular access to serve the building has also been revised and is now longer starting further north from previous position. There is also

now wider platform that enable landscaping on the eastern side of the building to further reduce the visual impact of the development on the landscape.

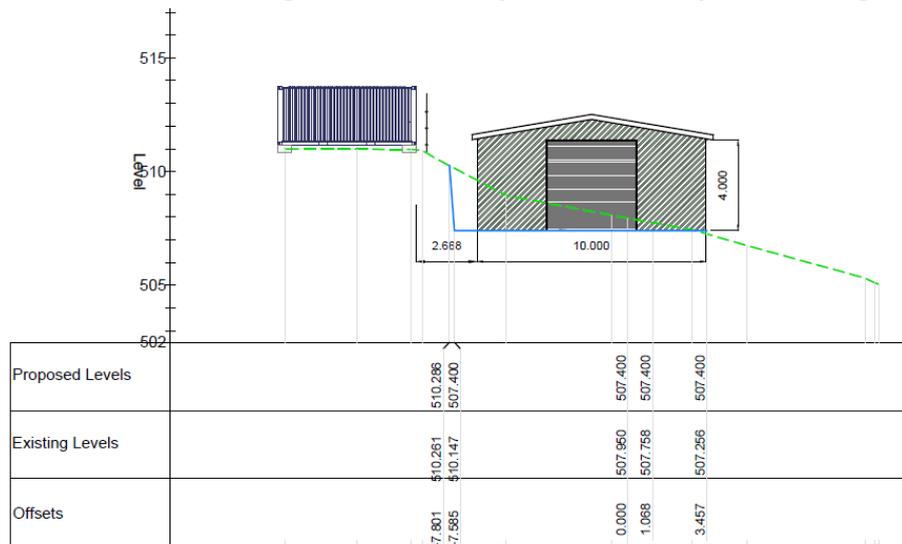
Diagram 1: The Revised Layout of the Proposed Storage Building



It is considered that with the proposed building now being placed closer to the fence on the western side of the site, there is potentially a greater opportunity for a meaningful landscaping to be provided. The issues raised regarding the revised

boundary of the Green Heartland Zone in 2018 is in only a proposal. It does not have any legal status, as it has not been suggest to public consultation and there is not record of official adoption of the revised.

Diagram 2: Section Through of Revised Layout of the Proposed Storage Building



CHAINAGE: 10.000

As part of the Revised Land Development Control Plan, there are proposal to revise Zone boundaries. Any revision of the Zone boundary will only be of legal status once the Revise Development Plan has been adopted following public consultation and examination. The revised development plan is at present in early stage of formulation

Diagram 3: The Revised Layout and Green Heartland Zone Boundary



Diagram 4: The view of the Proposed Access Road area of the Site



Diagram 5: The View of the Proposed Area of the Building Siting



Landscape Assessment

As previously reported, the proposed development has visual impact on the landscape due to its position on a higher plain and with the lower plain to the east. There are already number of building and structure on the Depot site that visible in the landscape and there are also number of other building that are much more visible in the landscape as compared to the potential of this proposed building in the landscape.

POLICY CONSIDERATION

The relevant policies of the Land Development Control Plan (LDCP 2012 - 2022) that are applicable in the assessment of the proposed development are set out below:

- Intermediate Zone: Policies IZ1 (a, b, f, g and h)

The proposed development is in compliance with the objectives of the LDCP policies that are applicable for this development.

The site abuts Green Heartland Zone, however the proposed building is not within the Zone, it would be appropriate to consider any policies that may be applicable against the landscape assessment. As previously indicated there is no specific Green Heartland Zone policy that consider visual impact on the landscape from within the Zone. In view of the fact that LDCP policy is silent, it would be only appropriate to consider the visual impact of the proposed development on the landscape objectively. In this respect, whilst there is visual impact on the landscape from a number of vantage points around the site, and in particular from the Francis Pain area to the east of the site, as the building will sit close to the ridge.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATION

In the previously reported the issue of material consideration is important to assess in considering the proposed development and is that the service provided by the utilities company is important to the Island and has been long established in this location.

D. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The development proposal is utilising an area that can best meet the needs of the depot operation on this restricted site. The revised proposal with building being sited closer to the western boundary. There is visual impact on the landscape, particularly from the lower levels to the east of the site, however given the redesign of the proposal from the original development application in 2019 and this further revision the potential visual impact is slightly less than the previous proposal.

It is also considered that the visual impact of this development on the landscape is much than the visual of impact on the landscape of number of other developments both within the Green Heartland Zone and those abutting the zone. The proposed development is not in conflict with development plan policies and the material consideration can be given reasonable amount weight in its assessment as the operation has been long established on this site and the need for an additional building to support the operations cannot be met elsewhere on this site.

The proposed development is not considered to detrimental to the amenity of the area, albeit some visual impact from the adjoin neighbourhood. It is therefore considered that the development can be supported with addition of a condition requiring a landscaping scheme to strengthen the landscaping on the eastern boundary.