

Planning Officer's Report – LDCA JUNE 2021

APPLICATION	2021/27 – Proposed Formation of Go-Kart Track for recreational purposes
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Permission in Full
REGISTERED	30 th March 2021
APPLICANT	Craig & Keith Yon
PARCEL	PB0020
SIZE	1.04 acres (4242m ²)
LOCALITY	Adjacent to the Motocross Track, Nr Bradleys Camp & Hospital
ZONE	Coastal
CONSERVATION AREA	None
CURRENT USE	Vacant
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Independent Newspaper on 1st April 2021▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	16 th April 2021
REPRESENTATIONS	None Received
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division	No Response
2. Energy Division	No Objection
3. Fire & Rescue	No Response
4. Roads Section	No Response
5. Property Division	No Response
6. Environmental Management	No Objection - Comments
7. Public Health	No Response
8. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
9. St Helena Police Services	No Response
10. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	No Objection

11. Sustainable Development	No Objection
12. National Trust	No Response
13. Sure SA Ltd	No Objection
14. Heritage Society	No Response

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

The application site is located adjacent to the motocross track near Bradleys Camp, where the plot is designated within the Coastal Zone and not within any proposed conservation area.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



THE PROPOSAL

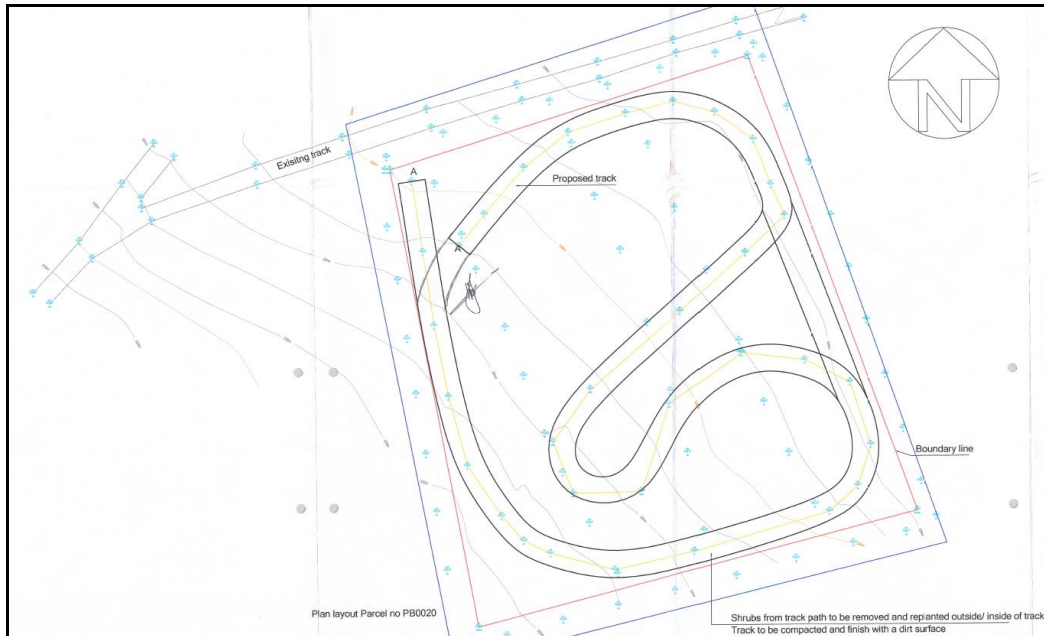
The area just to the north of the development site has been operating as an established motocross track for many years, which is also a pedestrian footpath providing access to Prosperous Bay Beach. To the south is Bradleys Camp and Hospital, which is situated approximately 300m away.

Access towards the development site is shared from the existing track towards the Motocross track. The proposal is to form a track for go-kart racing within a site measuring at its widest point 71.0m by 67.0m with a track that will be approximately 4m wide. The total length of the racing track being approximately 340m. The design of the track is intended to have minimal ground disturbance, where minor ground re-grading will be undertaken and the surface compacted. The track will remain as a dirt surface, retaining the natural appearance of the area.

It is worth noting this proposal will be for recreational use only, where it will be used primarily during weekends. No built structures have been proposed as part of this development. The development will share the existing parking facilities used by the Motocross track users.

A number of karts had been purchased prior to the development of the existing go-kart track at Merrimens Forest, however these are deemed unsuitable for this track, hence the developer pursuing the current site. The concept of a go-kart track in this area was brought to the attention of the Planning Officer in 2017, when there was a site visit with the Chief Environment Officer and the Crown Estates Officer. It was determined from a site walkover and informal screening that any proposed development would not have an adverse environmental impact on the area, and appropriate mitigation could be put in place to remedy any found, by relocation them successfully elsewhere in the area. Prior to submission of this application, a further site visit was held with the Environment Management Division and National Trust to establish if any endemics were present within the proposed site. Both stakeholders suggested that they would be able to oversee and assist with the removal of Samphire that was present within the site.

Diagram 2: Site Plan



STAKEHOLDER RESPONSE

No representations were received from the public or stakeholders, however comments were received from the Environment Management Division, which reads as follows:

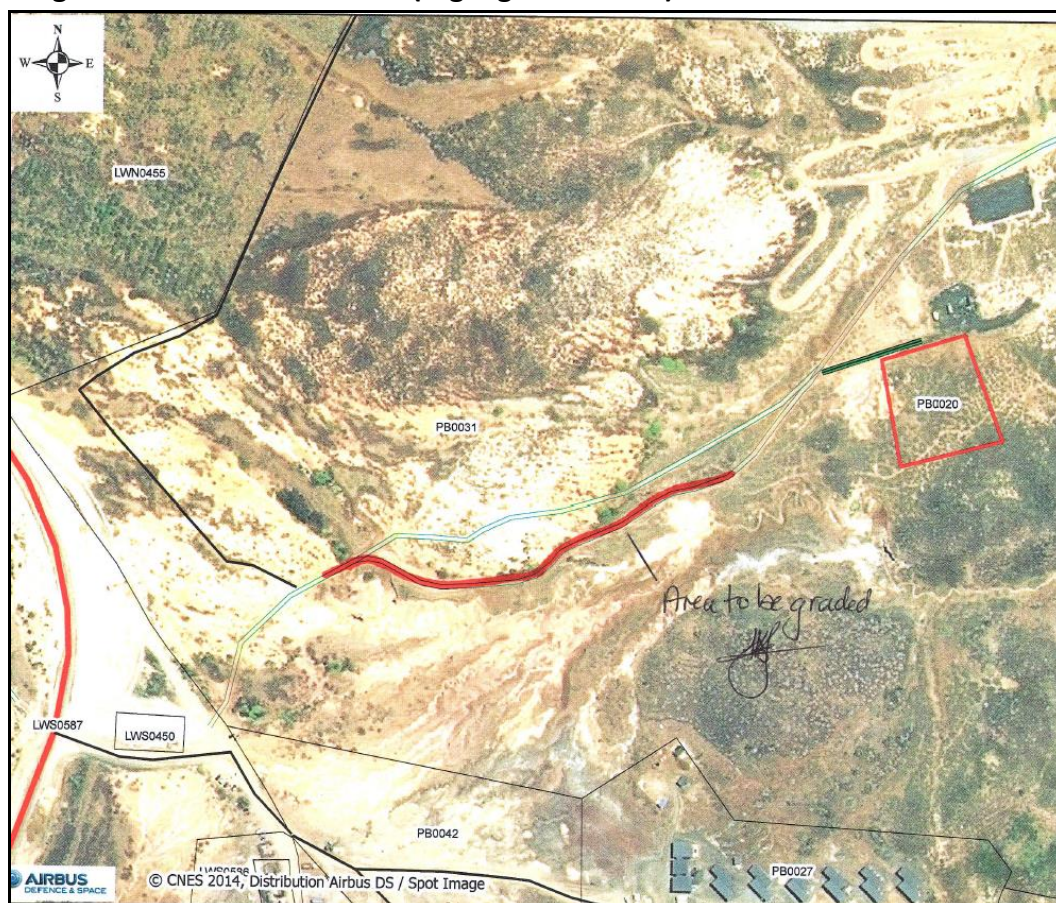
*'The applicant has discussed this proposed development with EMD (and the SHNT) and together we have identified and assessed the environmental impacts. The main environmental impact identified was the potential impact on endemic invertebrates protected under the Environmental Protection Ordinance, 2016 that are associated with the samphire (*Suaeda fruticosa*) plant. A number of samphire plants have been identified within the site area. As mitigation to minimise the impact on the invertebrate species, the plants can be removed and placed next to other areas where samphire is growing. This is an established process that has been used in other areas and on the advice of the SHNT. The removal and relocation of the plants will need to be done under a licence issued under the Environmental Protection Ordinance, 2016 by the Chief Environment Officer.'*

Officers Response – The applicant has consulted both EMD and National Trust (SHNT) with regards to the proposal. As part of the applicant's statement, it was made clear that they will work in collaboration with these stakeholders to relocate the samphire plants. Nevertheless this will be conditioned accordingly to ensure this is carried out prior to development commencing.

In assessing the existing track conditions from the beginning of the dirt track near Bradleys Junction to the development site, it was considered that number of areas of the track needed improving to ensure safe vehicular access. The applicant was advised to identify any access areas in need of improvement along the existing access track,

where proposals would need to be submitted for consideration of the Planning Officers. As a result of the discussion, the applicant conducted a site visit with the Emergency Services and the Roads Section, where written feedback from each department was submitted. All three representatives from the Emergency Services considered the track in its current state is safe for their vehicles should access to the area be required in emergency. The Roads Section advised that the track is considered to be safe for access by 4 X 4 vehicles, and advised that the grading of track would be beneficial and would further improve the track's surface condition. General maintenance on the road on a when needed basis should be carried out after. The applicant has agreed to grade the track in the going down to the development and on its way back as indicated on diagram 3.

Diagram 3: Area to be Graded (Highlighted in Red)



POLICY CONSIDERATION

The proposed development is assessed against the LDCP Policies set out below:

- Coastal Zone Policies: CZ1, CZ.3 & CZ.6

OFFICER ASSESSMENT

The development site is situated within the Coastal Zone, where the aim is to retain the natural appearance and ecology of these areas. Much of the Coastal Zone is of coastal scenery, rugged, remote and often peaceful with many examples of endemic wildlife as well as unique and visible geology, and potential for recreation as stipulated in the LDCP.

In assessing this proposal, consideration must be given to the siting of this development. Firstly, the location is situated on a flat plain between the ridge of Horse Point and that of Bradleys Camp and Hospital. The site however is not visible from the main road leading towards the Airport. The landscape is quite barren primarily consisting of open shrub land with some endemics present. As mentioned just north of the site is an existing motocross track, where this proposal will share the existing access and parking facilities. The development will not interfere with any existing footpaths, therefore complies with policy CZ.6.

In terms of the use, there is currently only one operational go-kart track on the island situated at St Pauls. It is envisaged that this track will be utilised for recreational purposes only and not for hire or reward such as the one at St Pauls. The track will be used by go kart owners on island, consisting of approximately 12 karts. This development is considered acceptable as policy CZ.3 grants development permission for recreational related purposes within the Coastal Zone. Due to the nature of the development, minor earthworks will be required to regrade the access track and the track site, no built structures are incorporated, the visual impact on the landscape will be significantly less than that of a built structure, nevertheless there will be some scarring with the removal of shrubs and formation of the track. As a result, sub-policies such as CZ3 b), c), d), f), g) are not applicable.

The applicant will improve the existing track benefiting users of both the proposed use and the existing motocross track.

Overall, the proposed development complies with the primary policy CZ1 as the general appearance of the land will not drastically change, as shrubs and endemics removed to accommodate the track will be re-located around the perimeter of the site. The use is in conjunction with existing recreational area being the motocross track, therefore does not rely on further development to carry out this activity. Lastly the track will be sited in area with land 10m above on at least two sides within 250m of the development, therefore complies with policy CZ3.