

Planning Officer's Report - LDCA JUNE 2025

APPLICATION	2024/56 – Construction of a Warehouse for Commercial Use including; Hire Drive/ Garage Operations, Wine-Making and Storage for Engraving Business and Some Domestic Items
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Full Permission
REGISTERED	19 March 2025
APPLICANT	Simon Henry
PARCEL	BG0192
LOCALITY	Head O'Wain, Blue Hill
ZONE	Coastal Zone/ Comprehensive Development Area (CDA)
CONSERVATION AREA	None
CURRENT USE	Existing Dwelling
PUBLICITY	The application was re-advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Independent Newspaper on 21 March 2025.▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	4 April 2025
REPRESENTATIONS	None
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division	No Objection
2. Energy Division (Connect)	No Response
3. Fire & Rescue	No Objection – Comment
4. Roads Section	No Objection – Comment
5. Property Division	No Response
6. Environmental Management	No Response
7. Environmental Health	No Objection
8. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
9. St Helena Police Services	No Response
10. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Consulted as per Guidelines
11. Economic Development	No Objection
12. National Trust	No Objection
13. Sure SA Ltd	No Objection
14. Heritage Society	No Objection – Comment
15. Maritime	Not Applicable

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

This plot is located within the residential area of Head O'Wain, Blue Hill, where it is designated within the Coastal Zone/ Comprehensive Development Area (CDA) and has no conservation area restrictions.

C. POLICY VALIDATION

While the site is within the Coastal Zone, the LDCP Strategy indicates that CDAs are located in the Intermediate Zone. Previous consideration has been given to this in determining Development Applications (mainly for residential properties) and is based on the LDCP Strategy:

LDCP Strategy at 2.6 states:

With the projected increase in ...economic development activity driven by tourism development and the need to ensure that these fit in within the infrastructure framework, specific areas for development have been identified....Development of these specific area will be targeted...

And, at 2.7 reads:

The targeted areas include Comprehensive Development Areas (CDAs), being areas within the Intermediate Zone where there is the opportunity for significant development ..., which will achieve optimum use of the land if planned and developed comprehensively and will be able to go ahead without time restriction if the developer is able to put in all services.

Policy IZ.1 states:

"Development permission will be granted for ...tourism-related, ...employment ...in the Intermediate Zone subject to [criteria]

In line with the LDCP Strategy, for the purposes of this proposal located within a CDA, the relevant IZ (rather than CZ) policies would apply.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant proposes to construct a warehouse for commercial use within their residential plot and directly adjacent to their existing dwelling, that will include; hire drive/ small garage operations, wine-making and storage for engraving business and storage of some domestic items.

The footprint of the storage unit will be 84m² approximately. The roof design will be pitched with a height to the apex of just under 4.7m (3.6m to eaves level), however this will set on a plinth which will result in the overall height above surrounding ground level being about 5m. It will provide approximately 376m³ in volume for storage etc. The height of the building will also allow a “mezzanine” storage area above head height.

The building will consist of a steel frame, clad with metal sheets with openings as follows; two roller-shutter doors at the front (south-facing); and a single, personal door situated to the North East side of the building. The roof will be constructed of partial metal and transparent sheeting.

The rainwater gutters will connect into two rainwater tanks located also to the North East and situated on concrete plinths. Rainwater will be used for irrigation purposes of fruit trees (used in the wine-making process) and general landscaping.

It is proposed to use the existing residential access to enable access to the commercial warehouse/ storage building.

No excavation is required for this development.

Storage buildings are within Use Class B1, as such, the proposal is for a change of use of the land to mixed use of C3 (dwelling house) and B1 (Business, storage and distribution). Garaging operations sometimes fall into Class B2 (General industrial) or in a class of their own (or “sui generis”); this is to be assessed below.

The Applicant has outlined the intended commercial uses of the warehouse specifically, as detailed below:

Hire Drive

Five cars have been ordered and are expected on Island soon for the hire drive business, with the intention to expand to a further 5 cars in approximately 2 years' time.

Garage Operations

The garage will have two car spaces, with one space used by the car lift. Space is also needed for car parts, as the Applicant is intending on having two damaged cars in the UK stripped, and the car parts, including doors, shipped to St. Helena, with usual service parts. Some work area is needed as small mechanic jobs will be done on the premises, whereas the bigger and more complex mechanical jobs will be done at the Applicant's designated mechanic's garage. The Applicant assures that there will be not any issues with excessive noise pollution and/ or smells.

Wine-Making

The Applicant is looking at some point in the future to produce wines for sale. This will involve fermentation tanks (looking at about 5) and a bottling area. A storage area will also be needed for empty and filled wine bottles. The Applicant also assures that there will be no problems with noise or smells for this business venture.

Storage for Engraving Business

The Applicant has an existing engraving business, for which they intend that the warehouse would be used for storing items needed for this business venture.

Domestic Items

The Applicant's intention is to also use some space in the warehouse for the storage of personal items.

Diagram 2: Site Plan

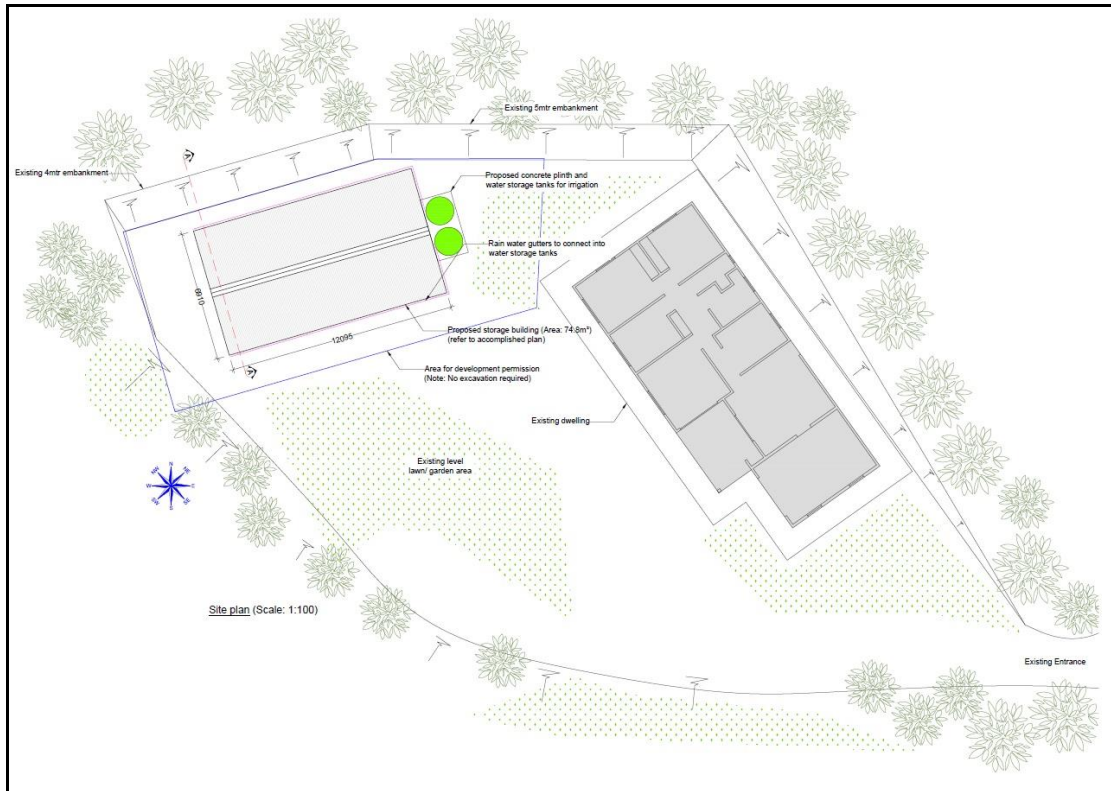


Diagram 3: Floor Plan Layout

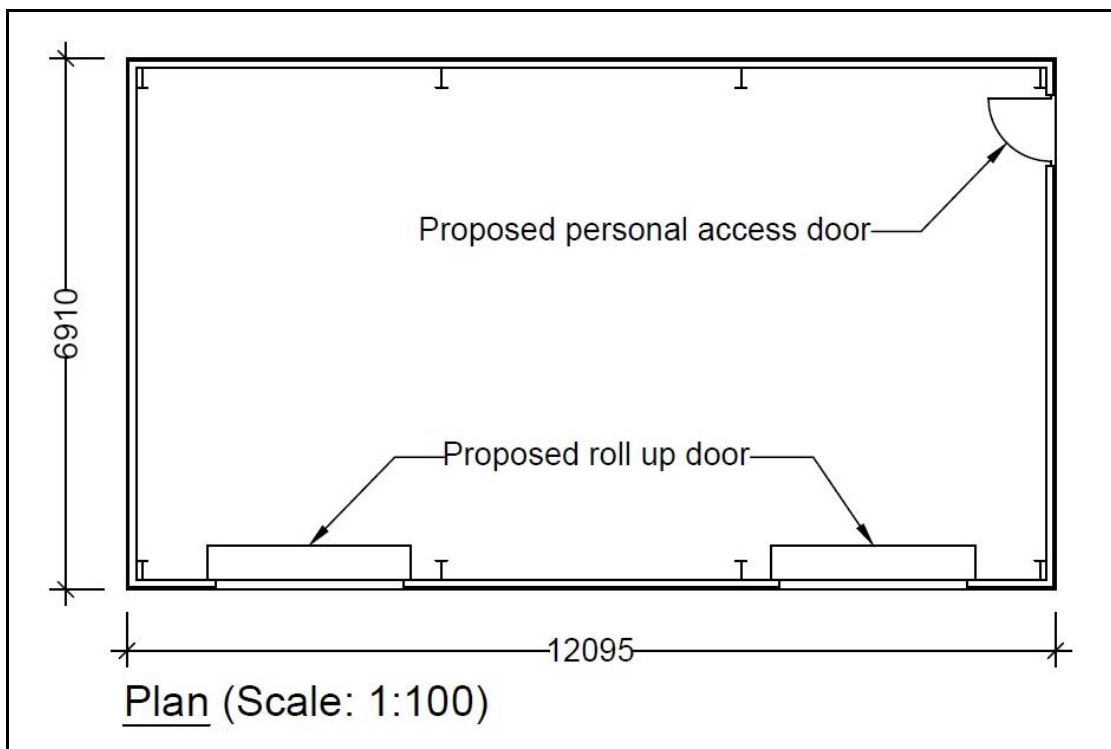


Diagram 4: North & South Elevations

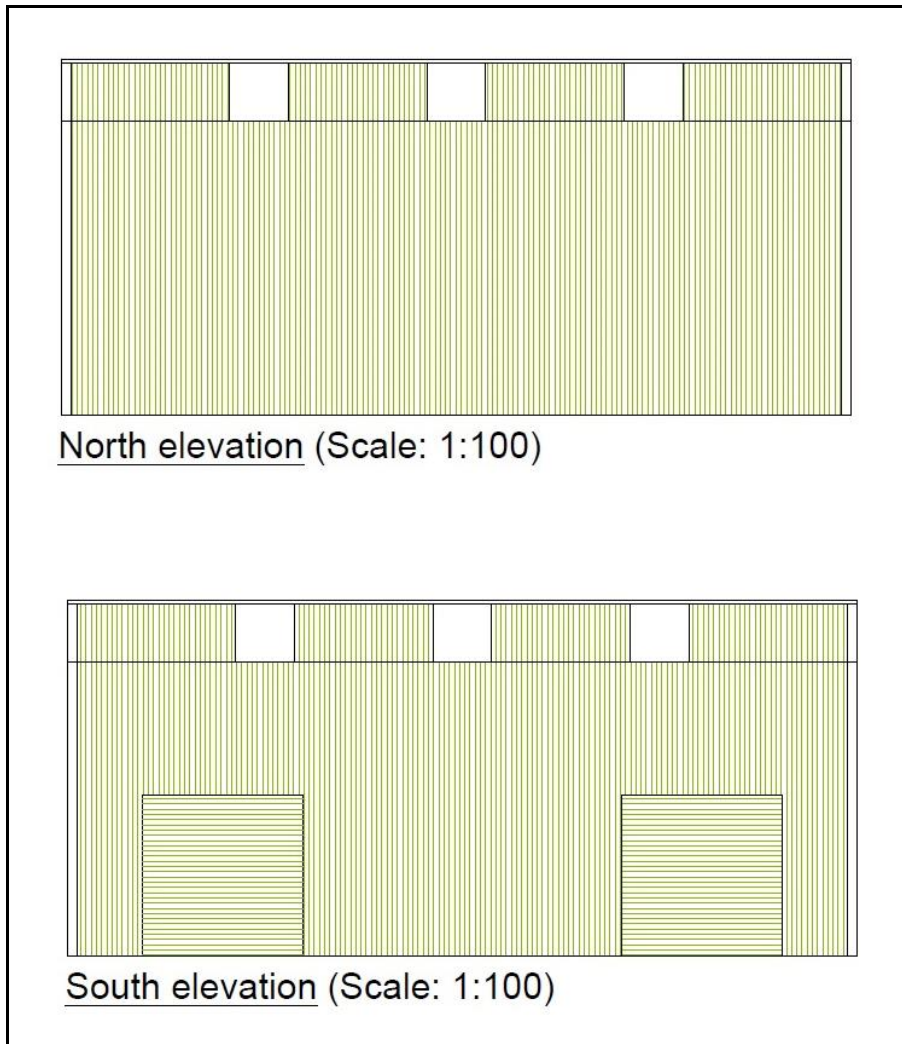
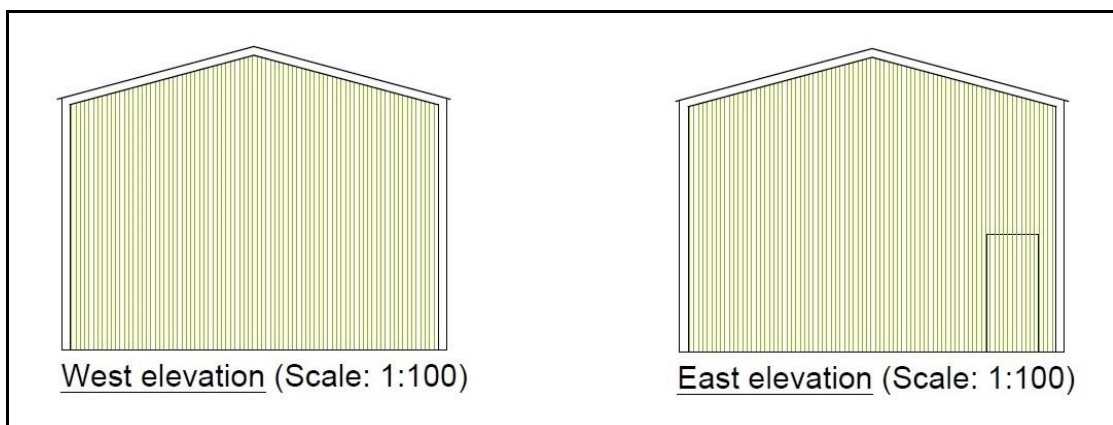


Diagram 5: East & West Elevations



Section Through 'A-A' (Scale: 1:100)

100*50*20*2.5mm Galv. Lipped Channel
Isolated to 6mm cleats with M10 Set Screws.
Cleats fully welded to truss.
(see Detail C)

1000 mm

Sag Column reinforced using
M12 Set Screws to 6mm Plate

254*146mm*37kg
Universal column

100*50*20*2.5mm Galv. Lipped
Channel Purlin Sag Column

Purlins connected to 6mm cleat
using M10 Set Screws (grade 8.8)

3712 mm

1513 mm

100*50*20*2.5mm
Galv. Lipped Channel Purlins

3212 mm

1 Layer of A303 Mesh
Reinforcement with 300mm overlap
(200*200*10mm)

Drip Flashing around the bottom of
the whole building

Universal Column anchored using
150mm H16 Through Bolts or
Chemically Anchored (fischer or similar)

1500 mm

1:3:3 Concrete Foundation Pads
with Y16 SC60 Main Steel & R8 SC60 Stirrups
(see Detail A)

6908 mm

200 mm

3818 mm

150*200mm*10mm
A303 Mesh reinforcement

1:3:3 Concrete slab
150-200mm thickness with
A303 Mesh reinforcement

Flashing Around the complete building
for weather proofing & Finishing

150mm Roofing Sheets,
Complete with PVC Guttering
& Down Pipe

Section Thru - D-D
(1:25mm)

Diagram 7: Photograph of the Site and Neighbouring Properties of Commercial Warehouse



Diagram 8: Photograph of the Site with Scaled Model of Proposed Commercial Warehouse Inserted into Position



STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK & REPRESENTATIONS

There were no objections received from stakeholders or any members of the public. However, there were comments made by *The Heritage Society*, *St. Helena Fire & Rescue Service* and *Roads Section* as detailed below—

The Heritage Society

There are no heritage concerns on the [revised] proposal 2024/56, but the Heritage Society suggests that a landscaping scheme should be required, by planning condition, because it is quite a big building and appropriate planting will help to soften its appearance in the landscape.

St Helena Fire & Rescue Service

The SHF&RS has no objection with this application.

With regards to the making of Wine within this Warehouse. If the applicant wishes to sell the wine, a liquor license will be required. To comply with this licence the relevant passive and active firefighting media will need to be installed within the warehouse.

The SHF&RS can provide guidance of what will need to be installed and the location within the warehouse, however a scaled plan will need to be provided.

Roads Section

Storm water /roof water shall not be discharged onto the public highway.

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 are set out below:

- Housing Policies: H4, H11
- Intermediate Zone Policies: IZ1 (see above Policy Validation Section)
- Employment Premises Policy: EP1
- Tourism Policy: T1 a), T3
- Sewage, Storm and Drainage: Policies SD1 b), c), SD3, SD4 and SD7
- Road and Transport Policies: RT1 (c and d), RT3 and RT7

OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT

In assessing this proposed commercial warehouse building that will be a steel frame, metal cladded structure sited to the North West of the developer's existing home,

located in the residential setting of the Head O'Wain Comprehensive Development Area (CDA), that falls within the Coastal Zone, but having no conservation area restrictions, the primary consideration is whether this type of development with all of its various aspects, can be supported in the immediate environment and designated zone, as it will be the first of its kind in this relatively undeveloped and quiet, rural/ residential area.

Although this proposed development is located within the Coastal Zone, the property is located within a CDA and therefore its development will be measured against Intermediate Zone policies as stated in Section C Policy Validation above.

Purpose of the Development

Considering the intended uses of the commercial warehouse, as detailed in the proposal, there are various business ventures that the building will support, including; hire drive, small-scale garage operations, wine-making and storage of the various business stock and some personal domestic items, which relates to Policies; IZ1, IZ3, EP.1 & EP.2, H.11, T1 a), and T3. Each of these policies are addressed individually below, against the development proposal.

Within **Chapter 22. Employment Premises, paragraph 22.7** reads; *"Small scale "clean" employment uses will be appropriate in residential areas, as set out in the housing policies in this Statement and live-work dwellings will be encouraged"*.

Employment Premises Policy EP.1 states *"Development permission will be granted for business premises in locations and business uses sufficient to meet the development needs of the Island subject to all such development being sustainably serviced, including to conserve water and energy and landscaped to integrate with their setting."*

Policy EP.2 states that *"Development permission will be granted for clean employment premises (B1 Use Class)... in residential areas subject to Policy H.11."*

In addressing stipulations of EP.1; the Developer's existing engraving business, not only personalizes items for sale, but also offers various other memorabilia such as; clothing and souvenirs for visitors, tourists and locals alike. However, the engraving and personalization aspect is a unique offering, as no other business currently provides this service on the Island and therefore supports this specific demand/ need.

As this proposal will be adjacent to the existing dwelling, services are already available for use as previously mentioned, landscaping requirements will be formally conditioned.

In relation to Policy EP.2, apart from the car maintenance element, the storage uses fall within B1 Use Class. As such, the majority of the proposed storage warehouse would be considered under Policy EP.2 which is acceptable development in a residential area subject to also meeting Policy H.11 (see below).

Policy H.11 states that; *"Development permission will be granted and encouragement given to the creation or conversion of dwellings to incorporate ancillary business facilities and uses, provided the uses are appropriate within a residential area and are of appropriate scale to be carried on:"*

- a) without material detriment to the amenity of neighbours
- b) without highway danger

When considering the above criteria under H.11 a), the commercial warehouse will be located on the Developer's residential property, within the parameters of the residential curtilage/boundary with a footprint of 83.5m². It would be sited adjacent the Developer's existing home which is single-storey and approximately 130m². Also, with a roof ridge height of maximum 5m above ground level, it will not significantly exceed that of the existing dwelling's maximum ridge height which is about 3.5m, so approximately 1- 1.5m higher. Considering this, the commercial warehouse will have a considerably smaller footprint compared to the existing dwelling and although it will have a higher roof ridge by approximately 1-1.5m, overall this would not be considered over-dominating of the residential property, in particular given the proposed separation and orientation.

As previously mentioned, the neighbouring property as depicted in Diagram 7, sited directly above the commercial warehouse, is of a much larger scale by comparison and so the commercial warehouse will not appear significantly out of size and scale with this other, larger-scale property in the immediate area, albeit that it would be a clearly commercial warehouse with metal walls and roofing and with 2 high roller-shutter doors and no windows, rather than another dwelling house.

The proposed warehouse would not be any higher than the height of the existing excavated bank located to the rear of the proposed building. Therefore from public viewpoints, the building would appear against this backdrop. Using suitably dark colouring (dark green/brown) and being screened by suitable landscaping (secured as necessary though planning conditions) would assist in ensuring that the proposed warehouse does not adversely impact on the character of the area significantly.

In terms of possible noise, vibration and smells associated with the commercial use, the applicant indicates that he will be the only person using the warehouse, that there would be no employees/ others present and that the car lift would be used only for minor car maintenance by himself without a car mechanic's services. Also, the cars relating to the car hire business would not (apart from those receiving a light servicing) be parked at the application site. It is considered at this level of operation, and providing suitable conditions are attached to any Development Approval, that this level of activity would not result in any significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

To address H11. b) "*without highway danger*"; the existing road to the property will be used for the proposed commercial use of the warehouse and a formal condition will be included to address the scale of the hire drive business in the event of potential expansion and thus having a detrimental impact on the state of the roads and also for the general level of vehicular activity coming and going from the Developer's property as a result of other business operations, that may also be subject to an increase due to expansion.

Policy IZ1 states that *“Development permission will be granted for residential, tourism-related ...employment ...development in the Intermediate Zone subject to the following criteria: ...”*

- a) the siting, scale, layout, proportion, details and external materials in any development, including individual dwellings, form a coherent whole both in the development itself and in relation to surrounding development,
- b) the proposed use is not materially damaging to the amenity of existing development
- e) the design and layout demonstrate *ii) if the site is in a CDA, the development complies with the development brief for that area [Note: there is no approved development brief for this CDA]*
- g) the development demonstrates the availability of safe vehicular access and all relevant services and will not be brought into use until these are in place including:
 - ii) collection and re-use of rainwater and means of dealing with surplus surface water*
 - v) if the development includes commercial uses, proposal for collection, treatment and re-use of grey water for landscaping and/or toilet flushing.”*

Similarly, in addressing policies IZ1 a) and b), as for the above considerations for H.11, the commercial warehouse will be sited within the Developer’s boundary and sufficiently far away from neighbouring properties so as to not be a direct nuisance or hindrance. Surrounding neighbours will not have direct view of the commercial warehouse due to elevations of the natural terrain and the orientation of their dwellings in relation to the positioning of the commercial warehouse. As already mentioned, the Developer assures that no smells or excessive noise will be emitted from the commercial warehouse, however formal Planning conditions have been included to directly address this concern and to counter any potential amenity issues with this regard.

The building will be situated well within the applicant’s boundary and does not impose on any other property or infrastructure.

With reference to policy IZ.1 g) which addresses ‘safe vehicular access’, as previously mentioned, the existing road to the property will be used for the proposed commercial use of the warehouse and a formal condition will be included to address the scale of the businesses overall, so as to mitigate as much as possible, expedited deterioration to existing highway. The proposal also includes collection and use of rainwater in connection with the proposed commercial use, in line with this policy.

Policy T1 a) states; *“Development permission will be granted for development to enable and encourage sustainable tourism development together with its supporting infrastructure, sufficient to drive the economic development of the island.”*

Policy T3 states; *“Subject to the policies for the... Intermediate Zone ...development permission will be granted for facilities to enable all tourist enterprises envisaged in the Tourism Strategy”.*

Whilst the development proposal is not directly associated with Tourism, it can be considered as the *“supporting infrastructure”* as it will serve as a store place of the stock for the existing business that directly serves tourists and for the impending hire drive business that has a known demand that is currently not being met entirely and so requires more hire drive services, which this business venture will help support that demand. As the small garage operations will be in support of the hire drive business, this means that it is also in compliance with this policy.

The Developer also intends to sell their locally made wine to tourists in future, for which this development would be the supporting infrastructure for this venture also.

Impact of the Proposed Building:

Amenity

Amenity concerns are outlined and addressed below—

Excessive Noise Pollution and/ or Smells

Operational times of the garage and any other potentially ‘noisy’ works that incurs at a noise level above a specific decibel reading, will be regulated by means of a condition attached to any grant of consent, so as to not be a nuisance to neighbours. This will also restrict the times at which possible undesirable smells may be emitted from the warehouse.

Excessive Traffic

The hire-drive element of the business will also be regulated by means of a condition attached to any grant of consent to control the level of vehicular business activity operating from the commercial warehouse.

General operations of the business may incur excessive traffic due to overall expansion and therefore a formal condition will be implemented to address the scale of the business as a whole, to control the level of activity coming and going from the commercial warehouse in this residential setting.

A condition is also proposed to address the possible deterioration of the existing road, due to increase in traffic activity as a result of the business operations and specifically to be liable to make good in the event of this occurring.

Aesthetic

As can be seen in Diagram 7, although the elevations and orientation of the neighbouring properties means that the commercial warehouse will not be directly visible to the

surrounding neighbours, it will be visible from other public view points at a distance. Albeit the Developer stated their intention to include landscaping and growing of fruit trees to support the wine-making venture, a formal condition has been included to mitigate this impact as much as possible, by requiring details and implementation of a landscaping scheme to blend the development into the landscape, in line with Policy IZ.1 h).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The site would become mixed use as residential and commercial within an otherwise fully residential locale.

The proposal for this commercial warehouse is a fit-for-purpose development that would serve the needs of the Developer's various business ventures, storage and prospective retirement hobby of wine-making. Albeit, this could be seen as setting a precedent of commercial development in a relatively undeveloped area.

Considering there were no objections to this proposal and the potential issues being addressed with formal conditions, the proposal complies with the Housing, Employment Premises, Tourist and Intermediate Zone policies and therefore can be supported.