



COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

Planning & Development Department

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Delegated Report

Application Number:	P/15/016/FUL
Recommendation:	PER/DEL
Date:	16th April 2015
8 Week Target:	22.04.2015
Neighbours Notified on:	Expiry Date:
Site Address:	Temporary Batching Plant Site, Parting Carn Lane,
Island:	St Mary's
Development Proposed:	Extension of batching plant site for siting of temporary sleeping cabins for Kier site staff.

No of Representations: 0

Chair and Vice Chair: Case officer discussed with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning Committee on 17/03/2015. Both happy with a Delegated Decision

Development Plan Policies:

2005 Isles of Scilly Local Plan

Policy 1 – Environmental Protection

Policy 4 – Economic Development

Policy 5 – Transport

Proposal D - Quays

Planning History:

In January 2014 an application was submitted on behalf of Lagan Construction Ltd, in relation to works at St Mary's airport (P/14/004/FUL). This was for the temporary change of use of agricultural land to a mobile batching plant and construction compound together with temporary residential accommodation for workers associated with the upgrade of St Mary's Airport. This application was approved for a temporary period ending on 31st December 2014.

In November 2014 an application by Kier (P/14/057/FUL) was submitted to continue using the site for the production of concrete for the purposes of the St Mary's Harbour Quay Extension project. This was approved under delegated authority in December 2014. This temporary consent expires on 31st December 2015.

Planning Assessment:

Description of Development

The current application is to extend Kier's use of this site to use a larger area compared to the November 2014 application. Kier are well underway with the quay project for Cornwall Council but have been beset with unexpected delays and as such the project has been pushed back and will run through the summer season. On this basis they wish to erect temporary worker accommodation units on the site, similar to those used by Lagan, but not to the same scale. Overall Kier wish to erect 10 sleeper units (3.8m x 2.7m with a flat roof of 2m high), each sleeping two people to accommodate up to 20 workers during the summer months. Kier also wish to extend the current use of the site to provide additional storage to ensure adequate materials on site to enable all weather work. To accompany the

residential part of the site a number of lighting columns are proposed (ecolite T lighting towers). Foul drainage will be connected to a septic tank, as previously used by Lagan.

The Site

The extension to the site now proposed covers around 2/3 of the original 1.56ha x2 agricultural fields previously used by Lagan in connection with the Airport works. The site is relatively well-screened from wider views as it is situated in a dip in the landscape. The site lies outside of the SSSI designations of Higher Moors and Porth Helick Pool and there are no known heritage designations within the site area.

Planning Observations

Policy Context

The proposed development of an extension of the site, approved for a temporary period for use as a concrete batching plant and associated ancillary works, is required to support the upgrading of St Mary's Quay.

The adopted Local Plan (A 2020 Vision) sets out the vision: *"Ensure the viability of resident communities on the Islands by providing sufficient housing, local employment, means of transport and general social infrastructure in order to meet their needs and aspirations whilst preserving and enhancing the Islands' outstanding environment and natural beauty."* Thereafter, as we are aware, Section 1 of the adopted Local Plan sets out six Core Policies. All of these six Policies, to a greater or lesser extent, are of relevance in the consideration of this particular application. In addition Proposal D relates to the quay and states that the upgrade of the existing quay on St Mary's subject to operational compatibility with Penzance.

Policy 1 – Environmental Protection – establishes that any proposed development will only be permitted if it respects and protects the recognised quality of the Islands' natural, archaeological, historic and built environment. This development seeks planning permission for a limited temporary period and therefore the resultant negative impacts on the natural beauty of the Islands will be short-term and mitigated both during and thereafter after the completion of the development with the full restoration of the application site.

Policy 2 – Sustainable Development – permits development where a proposal contributes to the sustainability of the Islands' environment, economy and/or local communities. The proposed development the subject of this application supports and is fundamental to the proposed extension of St Mary's quay which plays such a significant contributory role in maintaining the sustainability of the Islands' economy and local community.

Policy 4 – Economic Development – promotes employment and economic activity by providing opportunities for businesses to support viable communities. Case (a) of Policy 4 specifically provides for development that: *"contributes to the further diversification and essential modernisation of the Islands' economy."* The proposed development supports and is a vital component in the overall development to improve and modernise St Mary's quay that provides a vital link to the mainland, thereby supporting and improving potential economic development on the Islands.

Policy 5 – Transport – paragraph 38 of the adopted Local Plan states: *"transport is central to the continued viability of the Islands. Islanders and visitors rely on the air and sea services for travel to and from the mainland for business, holidays, access to specialist services and supplies."*

Planning Assessment

The main issues for consideration are whether the proposed temporary extension to the site will give rise to any detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring land uses, whether it will give rise to harm to the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is important that there are no other detrimental impacts upon aspects of acknowledged importance which includes highway safety, environmental harm or harm to or loss of significance of aspects of the historic environment.

The temporary extension to the site is required due to the delays experience on the quay widening and extension project. The contractors Kier, who are carrying out the work on behalf of Cornwall Council, need to continue to work on the quay through the summer. The proposal will therefore support the improvement and modernisation of St Mary's quay – one of just two main modes of transport to and from the mainland. It is considered that the principle of the proposal is considered acceptable.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

As previously assessed for both the Lagan application (P/14/004/FUL) and for the earlier smaller section of the site by Kier (P/14/057/FUL), the site boundary of the two main fields is such that it is located in an area sufficiently away from the built-up areas of St Mary's. The closest residential neighbouring properties are over 180m to the west at Parting Carn. To the south west is Old Town Studio, which is around 150m away but not residential and to the east is Tremelethen, which is residential but located over 180m away from the site. Given the natural topography of the site and surrounding landscape, hedgerows and a belt of trees along the west boundary I am satisfied that, subject to the controls and measures set out in the application, residential amenity will not be significantly affected by the temporary use of this site for the purposes of sleeping accommodation and storage. Whilst it is a large extension to the original size of Kier's use of the site, I am satisfied that the nature of the use of the extension is such that it will not have a detrimental impact in terms of noise, dust or emissions.

Light Pollution – The proposed location of the site is in a slight hollow and therefore wider views of the site are limited. Kier, however have indicated that they will be putting in light management measures including lighting that is safe and suitable for the task, directed only towards the working area and away from the site boundaries to minimise light spill, lights will be switched off when not in use and they will regularly assess the need for lights and the appropriateness of any lighting used. The use of x18 mobile 'solar powered' Ecolite T Lighting Towers will be used around the site for purposes of safety

Subject to the management and control of the above, as set out in the submitted application, the impact upon the amenity of nearby residential properties will be minimised.

Impact upon the wider landscape

The proposed temporary extension to the site will be within an area previously approved for temporary use by Lagan. It is the part of the site closest to the tree belt along the west boundary and sitting low down relative to the south side. The sleeper units will be visible when you are physically upon the site particularly from Parting Carn Lane but there are no wider or long-range views of the site from the surrounding landscape. The use is of a temporary nature until the end of 2015 following which it will be paramount that the site is restored to its original condition. The submitted planning statement includes a number of mitigation measures that seek to reduce harmful landscape impacts. This includes the post-use restoration of a hedgbank in accordance with the previously approved Arboricultural Management Plan. Kier has confirmed that a noise management plan has been included in this statement which includes measures to reduce noise. Additionally the application sets out measures to control light pollution and dust. Subject to these controlling measures being utilised at the site I consider the impact upon the landscape, as a result of the temporary use will be minimised.

Impact upon the natural environment

The residential units will use the tenant farmer's water supply and foul waste will be collected directly in the vicinity of the sleeper units in waste water tanks. These will be emptied as required by the Islands Waste carrier with waste water being disposed of at the islands sewerage connection location. This method will ensure that foul water is not allowed to be deposited directly into the natural landscape of this site. The Environment Agency has recommended an informative to ensure the waste water tank is fully sealed and subject to a management plan for its maintenance and the removal/discharge of effluent. Kier has confirmed they will have x3 number 500g waste water tanks (Tuff Tanks III) in connection with the residential units. These are to be located above ground to enable regular inspections in the vicinity of the sleeper units. They note that regular visits will be made by the waste contractor (Justin King) in order to ensure they are emptied as appropriate into the Bio Bubble. Any blockages would be 'rodded' through and as the tanks are emptied regularly. In terms of other waste water at the site Kier has confirmed that water run-off (non-effluent water) will be filtered through a Siltbuster RCW unit which will be located next to the proposed additional material storage area on the north side of the proposed extension. I consider this will ensure waste water is controlled before being allowed to drain back on to the land. The site is located almost 300m from the nearest SSSI, which is Higher Moors and Porth Hellick Pool which will not be affected by the proposed temporary use of the site. Whilst there is likely to be some impact upon the natural environment I consider that subject to the measures set out in the submitted application the proposal will not lead to a significantly detrimental impact. I consider it should be a condition that the site is restored to its former agricultural condition as set out in the Aboricultural Management Plan (Prepared for Lagan by URS that Kier have taken on in agreement with the Tenant Farmer and the Duchy of Cornwall.

Impact upon the historic environment

The site does not contain any listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks or historic environment records. The site is within the Isles of Scilly Conservation Area and the Historic Landscape Character is identified as 'farmland: anciently enclosed land (pre-historic to early post-medieval)'. English Heritage (now formally re-branded as Historic England) have stated that they do not wish to offer any comments and that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of specialist conservation advice. I consider that as the site has previously been used by Lagan the ground has previously been disturbed and is unlikely to uncover any previously unknown below ground archaeological remains. Cornwall Council note that the site was previously monitored archaeologically prior to its use by Lagan under P/14/004/FUL and as such the site can be considered to have been archaeologically sterilised by the earlier development and no further archaeological works are required in relation to the current application. The nearest Scheduled Monuments is not visible from the application site and lies almost 500m to the east. This is a platform cairn 195m north of Salakee Farm. This will be unaffected by the proposed temporary use of the site. Given the above assessment on visual impacts I am satisfied that the proposed temporary use of the site will not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the wider character of the Conservation Area. Subject to the applicant carryout all operations in accordance with the details set out in the planning statement I consider the application is acceptable in terms of the historic environment.

Impact upon Highway Safety

The site at Parting Carn Lane is located at the junction of the A3110 and A3112 where a temporary means of field access has been created on to the junction of these two roads. The A-roads are subject to the national speed limit of 60mph. I note however that the use of the fields is temporary; visibility is adequate to ensure that vehicles pulling in to or out of the site have maximum visibility to ensure accidents are avoided. It is likely that use of the site to sleep up to 20 employees could increase the number of vehicles travelling between the quay and the application site. However I consider that vehicle numbers are low generally with vehicles unlikely to be travelling at 60mph. I am unaware of any

accident reports to suggest that the increase in use proposed will be detrimental to highway safety. Additionally the use of this site by Lagan for 12 months was for a significantly greater number of employees. I am satisfied therefore that the proposed temporary use of the site, as proposed is acceptable in terms of highway safety.

Overall I am satisfied that the extended use of this site, for the purposes set out in the application, will not have a significant impact upon issues of acknowledged importance.

Conclusion

The extension and expansion of St Mary's Harbour is critical to the economy and future well being of the Isles of Scilly. The proposals falls within the policies of the Local Plan, in particular Proposal D – 1. Upgrading of the existing quay on St Mary's Quay subject to operational compatibility with Penzance. I would recommend that temporary planning permission subject to appropriate detailed conditions be granted.

Consultation Responses

Environment Agency – note the proposed development is outside the Schedule 5 of the DMPO and as such the following informative is recommended: The proposed cesspit must be fully sealed and subject to a management plan for its maintenance and the removal, discharge and disposal of effluent.

English Heritage – Do not wish to comment specifically but note that the application should be determined in accordance with National and Local Policy and on the basis of the Council specialist conservation advice.

AONB Partnership – In principle there are no objection to the use of this site given its previous temporary use in connection with the airport works. However there is a lack of detail in terms of re-instatement of the site. There is currently an additional section of the site (outside the red or blue lines) used for the storage of topsoil. The position of the hedge to be reinstated (figure 7 of the planning statement) is inaccurately identified.

Other Considerations:

The ministerial Statement 'Planning for Growth' and the National Planning Policy Framework have been taken into account in assessing this scheme.

The proposal will not have any detrimental impacts upon the wider landscape or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Signed: L WALTON

Date: 27/04/2015

Lisa Walton

Senior Officer: Planning & Development Management