

ORIGIN 3 LEGAL

Justification for Temporary Staff Accommodation Requirement

Application Reference P/25/016/COU

Application Site: Bryher Boatyard, Norrad, Isles of Scilly

Introduction

This document is provided in support of the planning application for temporary staff accommodation at Bryher Boatyard (planning application reference P/25/016/COU). In particular, it sets out the current staff accommodation, staffing requirements for the business operating at Bryher Boatyard and the need for additional staffing accommodation.

Current Staff Accommodation at Bryher Boatyard

The staffing accommodation at Bryher Boatyard includes the following:

1. 1 x worker's accommodation – 1 bedroom flat.
2. 1 x Owner's accommodation – 2 bedroom flat.

Staffing Requirements

The business at Bryher Boatyard includes:

1. The core yard operations, consisting of the main boat operations and hire, maintenance and general yard work. The core business includes the hire of 30 leisure boats that are let to holiday makers attending the Isles of Scilly. Boats are delivered and collected from clients who can be stationed on St Mary's or any of the Off-Islands. General cleaning, routine maintenance and repairs are carried out in the main building of the Boatyard and within the yard area including management of stored boats and equipment. To run the core business, 4 people are required (including the business owner).
2. The Chandlery is situated within the Boatyard. The Chandlery requires a dedicated person on a full-time basis. The Chandlery is open to the public with members of the public routinely coming and going to purchase goods from the Chandlery.

Therefore, to operate the business successfully, a minimum of 5 people are required.

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Additional Staffing Accommodation Requirements and Justification

In recent years, staffing has been challenging. This is mainly due to the lack of appropriate staff accommodation available at a reasonable price. Hiring holiday accommodation on Bryher or nearby Treco is simply unavailable (as accommodation is booked up years in advance) and not financially viable.

One member of staff working in the core operations of the Boatyard has not found accommodation on Bryher. Instead, he was forced to take accommodation in the public house on St Martin's, but during the busy holiday season had to resort to camping on the campsite. Residing on another island was not ideal and is part of the reason why the business struggles to secure employees without offering staff accommodation. It is a problem that occurs on the whole of the Isles of Scilly and not just Bryher.

The Chandlery was staffed by a local school boy last year – however, his availability was limited to school holiday time only. Being able to offer staff accommodation would enable the business to keep the Chandlery open on a full-time basis.

During the first year of operation in 2022, the business was able to open the Chandlery from May until September, 7 days a week, 9am to 4.30pm. The reason for that was because a couple were able to work together – although they were living on St Mary's. Because of the tides and boat time-table, both of these employees could not commit to full-time hours without the business owner providing one of the hire boats. Using one of the businesses boats did not prove to be a sustainable option for the business – however, reliance on the inter-island ferries means that start and finish times for those living off of Bryher will vary on a day to day basis – again, not sustainable for the operation of the business.

The Chandlery has not been able to operate on a full-time basis since 2022.

Conclusions

The core business and the chandlery at the Boatyard will continue to struggle to employ staff without being able to offer staff accommodation. Without the requisite numbers of staff, the business will struggle to operate and to provide the services that it strives to deliver – not to mention the profitability of the business overall. In the absence of additional staff accommodation the business will be forced to reduce its operations as it is impossible to continue without the necessary staff numbers who can only be secured where staff accommodation is provided. Two temporary staff accommodation “pods” will provide limited, but comfortable accommodation for staff members to reside in during the businesses operational period which spans from April until October, on Bryher.

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Policy LC4(1) (d) states that the proposed accommodation is located within an existing building or adjacent or well related to the existing business. The proposed “pods” complies with the requirements of the policy and this statement demonstrates the essential need for additional staffing accommodation for the business at Bryher Boatyard.

The staff accommodation being applied for will provide essential staff accommodation which is necessary to ensure that the business’s staffing requirements can be met.

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