

Application Number

P/2012/0704

Site Address

Blue Seafood Company
South Quay
The Harbour
Paignton
Devon
TQ4 6DT

Case Officer

Mr Robert Pierce

Ward

Roundham With Hyde

Description

Continue to site 40ft container on allocated parking area for a working area to meet EHO requirements continue to site 20ft blast freezer on allocated parking area to handle increased throughput

Executive Summary/Key Outcomes

The application seeks to gain an extended temporary permission for the siting of two containers, one of 12m and one of 6m within the Roundham and Paignton Conservation Area. Previously retrospective permission for the temporary siting of these containers had been granted with the period ending 31st May 2012. This is a resubmission of a previous application to renew the temporary consent which was refused by Members at their meeting earlier this year in May. The only apparent change now is that the applicant states that it meets Environmental Health Requirements and that permission is now only sought to site these units until the end of December 2013 instead of December 2014.

The key issue remains the same i.e. to consider the impact the containers have on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and associated tourism uses of the area. The containers do have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and as such their continued presence in this area would be contrary to policy BE5.

However, as before, the detrimental affect on the Conservation Area should also be considered against the potential impact on the overall business and number of people the facility currently employs.

On balance it is still considered that allowing the siting of the units in this location even until December 2013 would be unacceptable due to the negative affect their continuous siting has on the Conservation Area and associated uses in the area including tourism.

Recommendation

Refusal

Site Details

The site is the South Quay of Paignton Harbour which is within the Roundham and Paignton Conservation Area; more specifically the allocated parking area to the front of the Blue Sea Food Company. This application is once again retrospective.

Detailed Proposals

The proposal is now to extend the temporary siting of a 12m (40ft) container for the preparation of crab prior to cooking and a 6m (20ft) blast freezer until December 2013; the originally approved application allowed temporary siting until May 2012. The containers are sited on the allocated parking area outside of the existing factory building. The larger container is for the operation of opening and cleaning the crab in preparation for cooking, they are then placed in the smaller container which is the blast freezer. The company's factory burnt down in November 2008 and the use of these containers is required to continue the operation. The applicant has now confirmed in his design and access statement that it was hoped that the whole operation would have been moved back to the original site by now, however, as a result of underinsurance and little help from the banks this has not been possible although the process has begun with phase one, a packing station and cold store, being ready for June this year. The second phase could be in 2013 but until such time that the whole operation can be moved, the applicant needs to maximise capacity at the harbour site in order to satisfy customers and crab suppliers and maintain the current workforce of over 100 people.

Summary Of Consultation Responses

Environmental Health : Comments awaited.

Paignton Harbour : Requests previous comments are still applicable as follows:

1. It has been proven that since these containers have been sited on the harbour side, the congestion has become considerably increased by not only the volume of traffic but also the size of the vehicles necessary to support their business. This results in South road being blocked and access denied/delayed to other users, not to mention a fairly frequent monopoly of our loading bay. There is also an increased health and safety risk to the public re : wagons and fork lift operations, ,other transport etc. The previous tenants/owners used the space currently occupied by the containers to load, unload /park which helped control traffic and congestion.

2. The presence of these containers does nothing to enhance the image that we would wish to project to the public and has in fact had a detrimental impact on a conservation area .The public are also deterred from accessing Fairy cove re noise general operations/radios, smell, general environment and groups of employees have breaks/smoking in the access way.

3. Overall, the mix of a fairly large fish processing unit does not sit well with the smaller operators, retail outlets, restaurants, sailing ,rowing clubs and a busy slipway.

4. The understanding we had with the company was that they would not bring private vehicles onto the harbour estate. The employees have fulfilled this commitment but that cannot be said for all of the senior management which causes a problem in itself.

I recognize the efforts the company ops management have, and do make to resolve any problems that arise and that Blue Sea food employ a significant number of people. .However, the real issue is that they are just too big to operate in an already congested harbour, and the containers simply make this situation considerably worse on all levels.

Summary Of Representations

A total of 4 representations have been received all of which are objections. The key issues raised from the objections are as follows :

Congestion
Health and safety
Impact on Conservation Area
Impact on tourism
Noise
Odour
Overdevelopment of the area
Unsightly
Traffic and Access

These are re-produced at Page P.203.

Relevant Planning History

P/2010/0682	Siting of 40ft container on allocated parking area; siting of 20ft blast freezer on allocated parking area (retrospective). The application was given a temporary permission for up until 31st May 2012 at the Development Management Committee of the 6th September 2010
P/2012/0349	Continue siting of 40ft container on allocated parking area; continue siting of 20ft blast freezer on allocated parking space. Refused 24th May 2012

Key Issues/Material Considerations

The most significant issue to consider in relation to this application remains the

impact the containers have on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The containers utilitarian appearance does not enhance the character/appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

The previously approved application stated that the permanent retention of the containers would not be acceptable due to the harm caused to the Conservation Area and associated tourism uses which occur here.

However this issue should be weighed up against the existing number of people the company employs at the facilities and the potential for this number to increase.

In support of the application the Blue Seafood Company confirms that the budget for y/e April 2013 is £6.1m. Crabs required to achieve this is 1200 ton at a cost of £1.6m of which 80% will go to local boats each worked by two to four crew members. Four years ago the average price for crab landed locally was £1.00/kg. This year they will pay an average of £1.37/kg. As the European market for live crab continues to decline the importance of their continued presence cannot be overstated. Forecasted salaries and labour cost to the company to y/e 2013 is £1.8m. The £700k cost of Phase 1 of the rebuild at TBP was awarded to Western Industrial from Ashburton. The £1m cost of Phase 2 of the rebuild will also go to Western Industrial keeping as much work in the area as possible.

It is considered that, overall the detrimental impact on the Conservation Area still outweighs the applicant's justification as to why the factory has not been fitted out within the previously approved time frame and as such the application should still be refused.

Economy-

The applicant states that the current facility employs around 100 people.

Conclusions

The proposed continuation of the temporary siting of the containers until December 2013 is still not considered to be appropriate for planning approval, having regard to all national and local planning policies and all other relevant material considerations

Relevant Policies

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