

<b>App.No:</b> 141284	<b>Decision Due Date:</b> 9 December 2014	<b>Ward:</b> Sovereign
<b>Officer:</b> Anna Clare	<b>Site visit date:</b> 28 October 2014	<b>Type:</b> Planning Permission
<b>Site Notice(s) Expiry date:</b> 09 November 2014		
<b>Neighbour Con Expiry:</b> 09 November 2014		
<b>Weekly list Expiry:</b> 21 October 2014		
<b>Press Notice(s):</b> 24 October 2014		
<b>Over 8/13 week reason:</b> Brought to Planning Committee within Statutory Timeframe.		
<b>Location:</b> RNLI Lifeboat, The Crumbles, Eastbourne		
<b>Proposal:</b> Construction of a new lifeboat station to house the D-class inshore lifeboat and the shore facilities for the Tamar-class all weather lifeboat; Installation of davit crane for launching the ILB D-Class lifeboat over the sea wall; and Siting temporary lifeboat station for duration of the build.		
<b>Applicant:</b> Mr Christopher Refoy		
<b>Recommendation:</b> Approve Planning Permission subject to conditions		

**Executive Summary:**

The application relates to the replacement of the existing RNLI Lifeboat station with an improved building to allow both stations within Eastbourne to combine improving efficiency and cutting costs. In principle the replacement of the building is supported, the design of the proposed station is considered to enhance the site and surrounding area and it is not considered the development will result in significant harm to the amenity of surrounding residential properties in terms of loss of light or outlook. Therefore it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

**Relevant Planning Policies:**

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

7. Requiring good design

Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 Policies

B2: Creating sustainable neighbourhoods

C14: Sovereign Harbour Neighbourhood Policy

D10A: Design

## Eastbourne Borough Plan Saved Policies 2007

UHT1: Design of New Development

UHT4: Visual Amenity

HO20: Residential Amenity

### **Site Description:**

Sovereign Harbour provides a marina location surrounded by residential development of a variety of styles and characters ranging from houses to higher rise flats around four sheltered harbours with the lock gates. The central harbour affords access to the small south and west harbours as well as the much larger north harbour. The outer harbour is tidal and is generally only used for access and for the mooring of the RNLi all-weather lifeboat which requires a swift getaway in emergency situations. All other craft enter the harbours through the pair of lock gates, which are controlled by Premier Marinas the harbour owners.

The proposed site sits directly to the east of the lock gates adjacent to the Premier Marina's building. The existing lifeboat station and Premier Marina building are of similar styles, but neither are particularly high quality for the marina environment and are somewhat dwarfed by the adjacent 8-10 storey apartment buildings.

### **Relevant Planning History:**

None specifically relevant to this application.

### **Proposed development:**

The application proposes the demolition of the existing lifeboat station, and construction of a replacement two storey lifeboat station to house the inshore lifeboat, changing rooms and workshop at ground floor, with storage, training and crew rooms at first floor level.

The design of the proposed building comprises a rounded zinc standing seam roof 7.5m in total height, with stained hardwood walling and grey cladding panels with dark grey/blue brick plinth. The footprint of the building is 12m<sup>2</sup>.

The application also includes provision for temporary storage and changing facilities by way of 2, 6 x 2.5 x 2.5m containers, set to the north-west of the site within 2m high herras fencing. This is required during the construction phase to allow the continuation of the service.

A single arm slewing davit crane is also proposed to allow a safe method of launching the lifeboat. The davit crane is 5.3m in total height with a swinging radius of 5m, this is proposed to be located adjacent to the existing lock area as shown on the proposed plans.

### **Consultations:**

Highways ESCC – No objections.

Environment Agency – Consider no material exacerbation of flood risk as a consequence of this development and therefore no objection.

Neighbour Representations:

No comments of support or objection have been received to the application.

### **Appraisal:**

#### Principle of development:

The RNLi has a Tamar-class all-weather lifeboat (ALB) and a D-Class inshore lifeboat (ILB) stationed in Eastbourne at two separate existing stations; an ALB at Sovereign Harbour and ILB on the beach at Fishermans Green.

The ILB station is reaching the end of its useful life without significant expenditure or replacement. The split location of Eastbourne Lifeboats causes logistical challenges and the RNLi are keen to have one facility for the two lifeboats to reduce costs and to improve efficiency and launch procedures for the volunteers. The RNLi have investigated retaining the existing building however it was not considered that adapting the current building without considerable increasing the footprint would achieve the desired improvements.

The ALB will remain in the outer harbour and the D-Class will be launched via the proposed davit over the existing sea wall.

In principle there is no objection to the redevelopment of the site to provide more up to date facilities for the existing use provided the development is in accordance with Saved Policies of the Borough Plan 2007, and Policies of the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013.

#### Impact of proposed development on amenity of adjoining occupiers and surrounding area:

The proposed new building will sit in the same orientation as the existing building with a slightly larger footprint and will be slightly increased in height to accommodate more usable space at first floor. The new building appears more bulky given the alternative roof shape to the existing, however the current building has a relatively high ridge line for a pitched roof of this design therefore the increase in height is minimal.

The overall bulk is kept to a minimum by the curved roof and the new building will be set back from the adjacent residential block by approximately 13m as existing, therefore it is not considered that the new building would result in significant additional impact on the amenity of occupiers of the adjacent residential properties to warrant a refusal of the application.

The use at the site already exists, to some extent this application will intensify the use by combining the two lifeboat crews however it is

considered that the development will offer high class accommodation for the RNLI in an appropriate setting and due regard through the design of the proposed building has been made to the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers. Therefore the proposal is considered to comply with Policy B2, Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods, of the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013, which states that all development will be protect the residential and environmental amenity of existing and future residents

The davit crane is situated in a suitable location away from the residential properties to ensure minimal impact in terms of noise generation by the use of the crane to launch the lifeboat. The location is considered acceptable.

The temporary containers are sited to minimise impact on surrounding residential properties whilst allowing the continued use of the site and are therefore considered acceptable for a temporary period.

Design issues:

The adjacent flats sit on a raised deck above a series of walkways with car parking areas below. The apartment buildings are broken up into a series of elements with a combination of white render or bright yellow render with fully glazed pent house apartments. The immediately surrounding area is characterised with modern designed apartment buildings overlooking the highway and taking advantage of the seaviews.

The larger building, with minor increases in footprint and height provides more of a dominant landmark building to the harbour edge. It is considered there is sufficient area to accommodate a building of size and more presence without having a significant impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties.

The RNLI require their buildings to be long lasting and low maintenance, they have considerable experience in the proposing materials that 'work' in exposed marine environments.

The design is such to provide an innovative and interesting building in a key location at the entrance to the harbour. The materials are considered appropriate given the context of the site adjacent to modern apartment blocks and reflecting the harbour location. The design of the proposed development is considered appropriate to and sympathetic to its setting contributing to the local distinctiveness of the Harbour in accordance with the requirements of Policy D10A, Design, of the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013.

The containers to be used for temporary accommodation during the construction period are basic and whilst in design terms they would not be appropriate in the long term are considered acceptable to allow the continued service of the RNLI during the construction phase.

The location of the proposed davit crane is considered acceptable adjacent to the lock. Although large in size the harbour is a working harbour and machinery such as this is commonplace. The works will not detract from the visual appearance of the site.

Impact on character and setting of a listed building or conservation area:  
The site is not listed, nor is it situated within a conservation area.

Impacts on trees:  
There are no trees on the site.

Impacts on highway network or access:  
The lifeboat station will be operational 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, which is necessary given the search and rescue responsibility of the crew and lifeboat. Generally however the station is unmanned apart from one crew member, the full time mechanic, as the station personnel are all volunteers. The access remains as existing; ESCC Highways have confirmed they have no objections to the proposals.

Other matters:  
As with many RNLI stations the public will be encouraged to visit, to view the lifeboats and display boards, and when the station is manned they will be able to look inside the boatroom. The RNLI have a successful souvenir sales outlet in Eastbourne, on the Seafront close to the Western Lawns, and therefore have no intention to duplicate the facility at the proposed station.

With regards to lighting, the existing external lighting will be sufficient for most activities, such as arriving and leaving the station. It is likely that additional lighting will be required for the launch of the D Class, and will be facilitated by an additional light adjacent to the davit, and lights on the building over the boat house doors. The Design and Access submitted with the application, states that all lighting will be positioned and directed so as to not cause a nuisance to surrounding residential properties.

### **Human Rights Implications:**

The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

### **Conclusion:**

The proposed new lifeboat station is required to accommodate the co-location of the ALB and ILB and their respective crews, providing modern crew facilities. This will greatly improve the RNLI's current search and rescue capability from this location, in line with the RNLI's declaration of cover as agreed with the UK Government. The design of the proposed building is

considered to enhance the site whilst respecting the character of the area. Given the context of the site, the set back of the building from the adjacent residential apartments, and the height of the building it is not considered the development will result in significant impacts in terms of amenity on surrounding occupiers to warrant the refusal of the application.

The location of the davit crane is considered appropriate and unlikely to have any significant impacts on residential amenity.

The location and design of the proposed temporary buildings are considered acceptable given they are temporary. A condition will be used to ensure the temporary containers will be removed following the completion of the works.

**Recommendation:** Grant Planning Permission subject to conditions.

- 1) Time for commencement
- 2) Approved drawings
- 3) Samples of materials
- 4) Demolition and construction method statement
- 5) Hours of construction
- 6) The temporary containers shall only be in place during the construction period of the approved development and shall be removed on occupation of the building hereby approved.

**Informatives:**

This application does not grant permission for the flagpole/flag shown on the approved drawings which would constitute an advertisement for which advertisement consent is required, a further application would be required for advertisement consent prior to the display of this advertisement.