From their research and discussions, the team gained an understanding of the desires of each key party. Their focus then moved to undertaking internet searches, and contacting a range of small firms used as a ‘Dragons’ Den’-style network in order to identify possible solutions.

The team identified a small firm producing a new type of closure, which overcame many of the issues identified. The next stage was to revisit each of the stakeholders, to establish the degree to which the closure was appropriate, and overcome any problems. This involved examining:

- Whether the category team liked the proposed solution.
- Whether it ran on the supplier’s canning lines with minimal implications/costs in change.
- Whether it could be made commercially (within a reasonable cost) at a large scale.
- If it helped the aged.

The project then underwent the established process for developing packaging, as outlined in Project B. However, at the time of writing, the project had not yet reached the stage at which investment would be made or testing was undertaken. With respect to capital equipment investments, the team were concerned that issues were likely to arise, as the development would have cost implications for “both machinery and retraining… [particularly] as the packaging may not directly benefit them, therefore they are less keen to invest…. [indeed] a new type of packaging may cost upwards of thirty thousand pounds in retooling”, hence “even small changes are sometimes precluded” [RA2].

In the case of this development, it could potentially impact on a number of suppliers: hence the team took considerable time to evaluate the results. Moreover, the retailer would have to “share the costs of investment with the supplier, or leave it to them to invest in new equipment” [RA3]. The decision was to have a significant impact on all parties involved: a “cause for concern amongst the key decision makers, particularly buyers… they are concerned about the unit and equipment costs” [RA3]. Despite this, the head of packaging innovation convinced them it was worthwhile to pursue the development, due to its significance to a key segment of the retailer’s customers, and potential to increase the price as a result of change.
8.2.7 Project D: Development of New Fish Packaging

Project D focused on the development of a new type of packaging for fish; the development process is summarised in Figure 8.2.6. The project was initiated from the category team’s basic analysis of the factors disliked by consumers when preparing and cooking fish. These were seen to preclude some from eating fish as often as they might. The marketing team was recruited to help understand these factors. It then worked alongside the packaging team, and undertook consumer focus groups at the company’s headquarters. Following the analysis of the results the category manager worked together with the packaging team to put together a brief, which was subsequently approved by managers. A joint meeting was then held, at which the following key issues were outlined:

1. Consumers do not like preparing fish because of the smell, and particularly the fact it can remain on their hands
2. Consumers do not like cooking fish because of the smell
3. It may be possible to cook fish better if it is contained inside a form of pack that aids the cooking process, creating a better end result

A project was initiated to generate a new solution. The central aim was to generate a pack that fish could be cooked inside, which would avoid consumers having to directly touch the fish, stop the smell infiltrating the kitchen, and help to steam the fish.