

Supplementary Planning Guidance

The Future Development of Fishbourne Quay



May 2002

ISLE of
WIGHT
COUNCIL

1. Background

- 1.1 The main buildings and facilities at Fishbourne Quay are currently used as a boat building yard, with outside boat and hovercraft storage on the surrounding land, including reclaimed areas to the north and a separate specialist engineering company occupies a smaller building to the east and a business co-ordinating export of fish produce from the Island to Europe. Current employment levels on the site range between 30 and 50 (depending upon work loads) and other jobs such as fishermen rely on the site. Parts of the site are currently unused.
- 1.2 The boatyard facilities need investment for improvements, including repairs to the quay wall and creation of additional slipway facilities, to secure future orders for work. Proposals were made for residential development on two parts of the site to raise the capital required to improve other parts of the employment site so as to secure their longer term business which is the building of aluminium boats, vessels and structures.
- 1.3 The proposed introduction of residential development in an eastern and a central location did not indicate the logical potential for additional units on adjoining land if the proposals were to have been approved. It was likely that further applications for additional residential development, probably another four dwellings at least, would follow the approval of the original application.
- 1.4 The planning application was amended deleting the residential units from the centre of the site and approved. The two dwellings approved do not support all the potential improvements. However, to retain the employment use there are only limited opportunities, if any, to create capital value for re-investment. The shared ownership of the wider site means that not all the capital which may be generated from any development opportunities will be available for reinstatement in the site.
- 1.5 The council are of the view that the potential of all land within the boatyard complex needs to be included in a comprehensive proposal for the site, hence the preparation of this planning brief.

2. Land Use Policy for the Site

- 2.1 The Statutory Development Plan for the area is the Isle of Wight Unitary Development Plan adopted in May 2001. The currently developed part of the site, together with the site of former workshops, is included within the development envelope of Wootton and Fishbourne. The immediate waterfront area and the previously filled area of lagoon lie outside the development envelope.
- 2.2 Historically, the primary use of the site was as a boatyard. This included the use for boat storage/mud berths in the now filled in lagoons and ancillary uses in now demolished buildings, including chrome plating and engineering (including the building of the world land speed record car "Thrust"). The historic and current use of the site is therefore for employment purposes with access to tidal waters from pontoons and slipways and thence to deep water. Council policies E3 and E7 in the UDP are that such uses should be broadly

retained and protected. The retention of waterfront industry has been supported here and elsewhere on appeal. There are very limited opportunities around the Island for the creation of any additional or replacement boatyard and waterside employment facilities due to physical or nature conservation constraints on coastal locations. The immediate frontage with quay wall, pontoon area and slipway is not within any nature conservation areas but adjoining intertidal area and slipway is not within any nature conservation areas but adjoining intertidal areas are within national SSSI and European SPA and Ramsar designations.

- 2.3 Historically there were four residential dwellings (two pairs of semi-detached houses) on the eastern part of the site which were demolished to enlarge the boatyard usage.
- 2.4 The contention by the site owners that the majority of the site was a brownfield site and should be developed for housing to raise funds for the upgrading of AS shipbuilders factory and premises was subject of the Public Inquiry into the Unitary Development Plan. The inspector rejected that argument, and noted that housing did not require a coastal location and that frontage development for residential use would be likely to lead to pressure for coastal defences. In addition he noted the scarcity of waterfront sites for industries such as boat building and hovercraft manufacture.
- 2.5 Planning permission has in the past been granted for additional uses such as marina pontoon moorings, club/restaurant, boat park and car parking and to bring unauthorised reclamation works within control subject to strict conditions. This proposal was never implemented.

3. Current Access

- 3.1 Access is currently along a private narrow lane, Ashlake Copse Road, which is in the same ownership as parts of the boatyard, and which also serves a number of large detached residential properties, some in extensive curtilages. The junction with the adopted highway system is substandard both in width and visibility splays and there is a blind bend along its route. Historically additional residential development along this lane has been refused planning permission on the grounds of this inadequate access. A potential replacement more direct access to the site, Ranalagh Drive, is constructed close to the site but the final link is not in place. There are conditions on the consent for the linking road which have not been met to date. There is a right of way from Ashlake Copse Road which crosses the site to the property Fairhaven.

4. Ownership

- 4.1 Ownership of the site is split and shared in a complex pattern and there are a number of covenants on the site which add to the complexity and potential cost of achieving a satisfactory long term future for the site. Ownership and covenants boundaries appear to have dictated the contorted layout of past proposals. Planning obligations attached to consents for comprehensive proposals for the regeneration of the site in the past have not been signed by

all parties creating difficulties for securing overall solutions to the site's problems.

5. Unlocking the Site's Full Employment Potential

5.1 As well as the complex ownership arrangements on the site there are a number of interlocking covenants which impinge on a rational layout and use of the site. It may be that additional employment investment could be attracted to the site if it were not constrained by such restrictive covenants. Covenants on parts of the site including the reclaimed area include not carrying out trade or business on the land. Covenants on the main boat shed and pontoon area restrict the use to marine engineering, with no light industry or chromium plating permitted. Covenants on other areas of the site prevent the use of the land for the construction or manufacture of boats or marine engineering or chromium plating. It appears that the covenants are to the benefit of other part owners of the site so it may be possible to negotiate changes or relaxations although there may be costs involved. The use of compulsory purchase powers to secure common basis for the whole site for the proper planning of the area, promoting a comprehensive solution is an option if negotiations seem likely to fail. This would need to be based on a sound economic appraisal and the costs being borne by the overall development.

6. Aims for the Site

6.1 The agreed aim for the site is that any development should enable the retention and improvement of employment development in the area where existing and previous industrial buildings stood on the site frontage and which fall within the UDP development envelope.

6.2 Any proposals should be for the whole of the site and the benefits for employment should be secured before any enabling development is occupied. The current employment floorspace area should be at least equalled in any redevelopment. The acceptability of proposals should be judged against achieving the best practical solution for the site rather than to meet artificial ownership and covenant requirements. This may involve phased development working towards the agreed overall solution set out in this brief.

6.3 **In consultation on the future of the quay there was a road consensus amongst the respondents that marine related industry is appropriate for the site and that the waterfront should be reserved for this use.**

6.4 Because parts of the site had previous uses involving chemicals and parts are reclaimed these should be investigated and an assessment of the likelihood of contamination undertaken to support any planning applications. Proposals for development should include findings of investigations undertaken into potential contamination and any measures required to eliminate unacceptable risk.

6.5 **The use of the hardstanding area created from the filling of the lagoon needs to respect the nature conservation value of the adjoining Special**

Protection Area and SSSI. The shortage of small boat hardstanding and facilities and their employment generation potential is highlighted.

- 6.6 The reclaimed area is considered suitable for outside boat storage to support marine related employment with the existing surface being improved. The boundary of the reclaimed area requires some tidying/treatment particularly where it abuts the shoreline of the creek and the shingle bank, both of which are of nature conservation importance.
- 6.7 The existing slipway and hard standing areas lend themselves to small boat/yacht handling operations and storage and employment/business opportunities around such uses should be explored. If the overall future of the majority of the site could be secured for marine related employment then an element of residential development located on the easternmost part of the site would be considered acceptable (subject to achieving safeguards) but would need to be justified by securing employment and improved employment facilities and access on the site.

7. Re-Introduction of Residential Uses

- 7.1 The Council were concerned that recent proposals have not included the whole site and have failed to provide a comprehensive approach to the future use of the area. Any loss of part of the site from employment uses to the residential development will achieve only a one off capital injection and will lose the opportunity of longer term wealth generation from business.
- 7.2 **The introduction of some residential development, subject to safeguards such as noise control, to support the provision of employment, was generally supported by residents during the consultation.**
- 7.3 The release of any further land within the site for residential purposes is only considered justified if it can be guaranteed to secure, and will not prejudice the long term retention of the waterfront employment uses. In the past the use of the easternmost part of the site for residential development has been considered possibly acceptable subject to securing the continuation of appropriate marine related uses for the remainder of the site and achieving the more direct road link to Fishbourne Lane.
- 7.4 The proposals for the re-introduction of residential development within the site could raise the risk that current and future employment uses might be constrained in time or operations so as not to create a nuisance to the “new residents”. To ensure that the introduction of residential uses to any part of the site will not in future lead to restrictions on the business activity or operations it is recommended that a comprehensive noise assessment of actual or anticipated noise emissions be carried out. This will identify potential noise problems and the adoption of suitable mitigating measures to ensure there is not noise nuisance created. The relocation and re-building of other employment buildings should allow suitable sound proofing measures to be incorporated into new structures.
- 7.5 **The layout of land uses suggested in the Council’s consultation document, and reiterated as concept layout 1 by Aluminium Shipbuilders, would be acceptable to many of those responding.**

- 7.6 The land use layout is illustrated on the attached map. It shows an agreed logical arrangement of uses and potential access routes. The employment use located immediately adjoining the suggested residential area should be a light industrial (B1) use either because of its operations or through the control of potential nuisance to occupiers of residential properties. The use of buffer uses such as car-parking and appropriate screening may re-enforce the separation of uses and reduce the potential for conflict.

8. Achieving Improved Access

- 8.1 Planning permission for a direct link from Fishbourne Lane to the site has been granted and commenced in the form of Ranalagh Drive, but not completed. This remains a private road for most of its length and has a value to the owner if it is to be used to support development on the quay. The satisfactory completion of this new access route is regarded as a pre-requisite for the regeneration and development of the quay and the cessation of the use of Ashlake Copse Road for vehicular access to Fishbourne Quay.
- 8.2 **The development at Fishbourne Quay should be served by vehicular traffic entirely from Ranalagh Drive and will therefore no longer require the use of Ashlake Copse Road.**
- 8.3 **There should be no access to Ashlake Copse Road from Ranalagh Drive to restrict traffic entering Ranalagh Drive from Fishbourne Lane to that serving properties in Ranalagh Drive, The Poplars and Fishbourne Quay only.**
- 8.4 **Following consultation on the possible creation of a one way circulation route along Ashlake Copse Road this is not considered to raise practical difficulties for many of the residents so this road should remain open for two way traffic.**
- 8.5 **An exit from Ashlake Copse Road to Ranalagh Drive should be created to obviate the need for a turning area but this should be a right turn only to prevent the continued use of Ashlake Copse Road by traffic to the Quay. This may only be practical if the means of preventing left turns for most traffic is removable by the property Clymping. It may be that lockable bollards could provide a solution with Fairhaven also having a key is required so their right of access along Ashlake Copse Road can be retained.**
- 8.6 **With many private roads ownership and maintenance responsibility is vested in the properties fronting the road. This is perhaps the only way in which residents will be able to ensure the future upkeep of Ashlake Copse Road if this can be agreed with the current owner and residents are prepared to be involved.**
- 8.7 In practical terms it is unlikely that traffic to Fishbourne Quay would use Ashlake Copse Road as an alternative to the direct route of Ranalagh Drive. However the junction design between the new and the existing road should restrict a left turn access from Ashlake Copse Road on to Ranalagh Drive. The entry to Ashlake Copse Road from Fishbourne Lane should be signed as

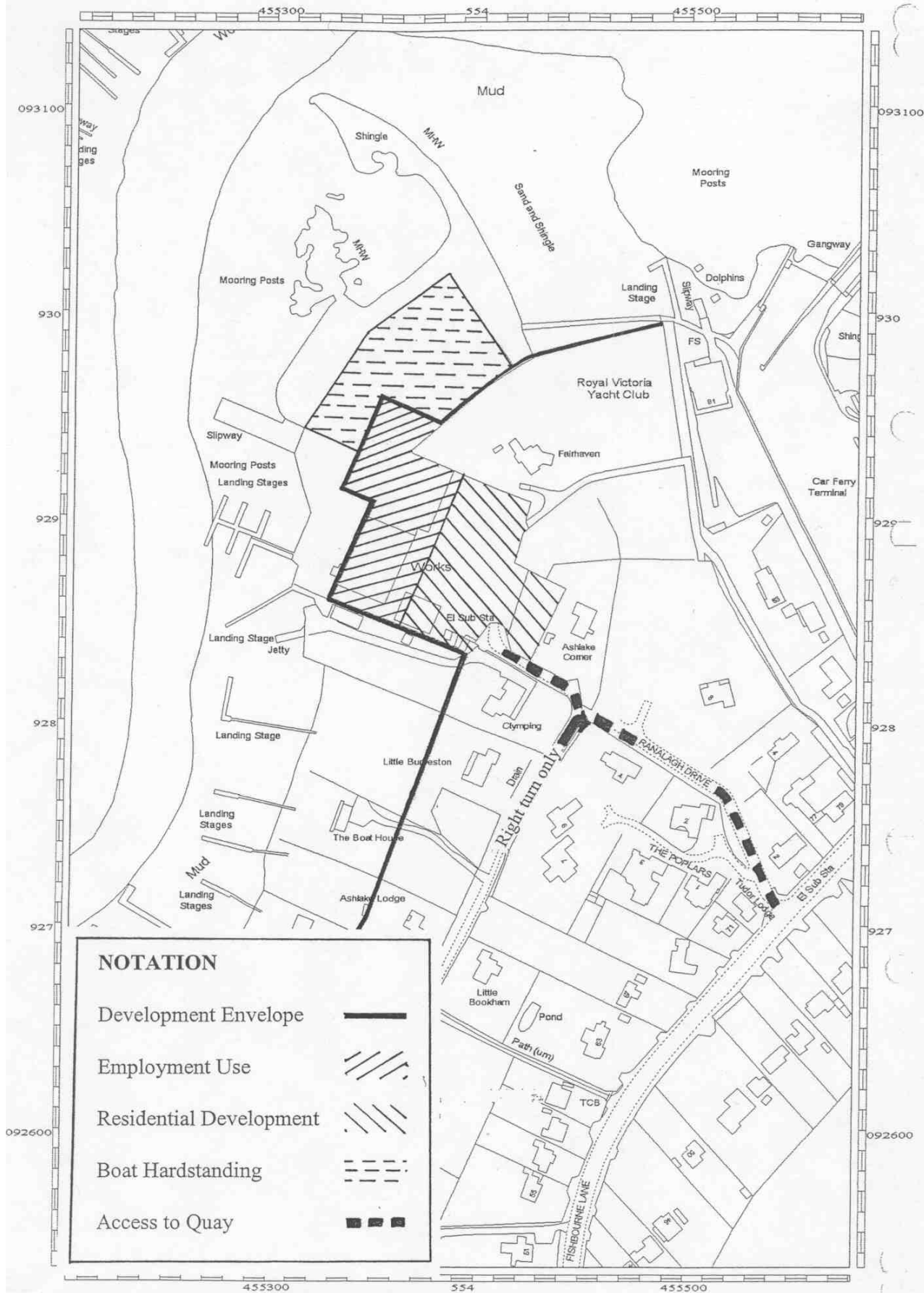
“No Access to Fishbourne Quay” and a width restriction (other than for access).

- 8.8 Before Ranalagh Drive can be used to serve Fishbourne Quay a number of issues need to be addressed including establishing appropriate boundary treatment between the road and numbers 2 and 4 The Poplars. **A mixture of boundary treatment should be sought to satisfy each of numbers 2 and 4 The Poplars whilst also addressing the sight line issue and properties in Ranalagh Drive. Accurate detail of ownership boundaries will be required.**
- 8.9 **The “keep clear” area at the junction of Ranalagh Drive and Fishbourne Lane needs to be extended to prevent conflict with traffic queuing for the ferry and could become a yellow box junction. It will need to provide sight lines of the local traffic lane for vehicles existing across queuing ferry traffic.**
- 8.10 There is also the possibility that a few additional residential infill plot developments may come forward along Ashlake Copse Road if previous traffic levels to the Quay are removed. The granting of access rights for these might contribute to the overall cost of achieving the improved access arrangements.

9. Further Advice

- 9.1 It is recommended that prior to submission of any planning applications that early contact is made to discuss detailed proposals with planning and highway officers of the Council. The Council planning services section is at Seaclose, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 2QS. Telephone (01983) 823552. Fax: (01983) 823851.

FISHBOURNE QUAY



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