

Our ref: JPW1815

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Date: 22 August 2022

Development Management Team
Eastleigh Borough Council
Eastleigh House
Upper Market Street
Eastleigh
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Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application – Replacement of an existing two storey commercial/workshop building in existing boatyard

We are pleased, on behalf of Boatfolk Marinas Ltd (Boatfolk), to submit a full planning application for the above development.

This planning application has been submitted via the Planning Portal and comprises this cover letter plus the following:

- Application Form and Certificate of Ownership;
- Design and Access Statement (Plum Architects);
- PA22-145:01 Site Layout & Section/Elevation as existing (Plum Architects);
- PA22-145:02 Site Plan & Location Plan (Plum Architects);
- PA22-145:03 Floor Plans as proposed (Plum Architects);
- PA22-145:04 Elevations as proposed (Plum Architects); and
- PA20-139:03 Site Layout as proposed (Overall Masterplan – for information) (Plum Architects);
- Flood Risk Assessment (Avison Young).

The statutory application fee of £7,424.20 is to be paid directly to Eastleigh Borough Council by Boatfolk via a BACS transfer.

Background Information and Context

Boatfolk

Boatfolk are a major Marina operator, who own 11 marinas around the UK. A number of these marinas are located in the Hampshire and Dorset area, including on the Isle of Wight and in Portsmouth Harbour.

The Boatfolk ethos is to re-invent their marinas such that those waterside destinations become more than just a place for berthholders to berth their boats. Boatfolk therefore want to provide improved facilities such that the destinations become a place to enjoy for experienced boaters as well as for those new to boating.

Boatfolk are also passionate about their responsibility to the environment and are actively seek in new ways to minimise impact on the planet whilst getting more people to get involved in boating, have fun afloat whilst taking care of the water environment, thereby creating a community of responsible boaters for now and for future generations.

Boatfolk took over Deacons Marina in March 2017, with aspirations to provide a successful modern marina offering not only high-quality berthing but a range of high-quality services and facilities including commercial premises, boat repairs and sales, and an eating and drinking establishment. The ongoing development

proposals at Deacons Marina represents the reorganisation and improvement of the facilities that Boatfolk consider necessary to secure the success of the marina.

Deacons Marina Masterplan

A planning application (F/21/91355) was submitted and subsequently approved by Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) on the 18th March 2022 for *'improvements to the site entrance, new landscaping and a revised public car parking area, including a 250mm increase in ground levels for flood protection, external alterations to Deacons House entrances, re-cladding, the addition of a first floor balcony, along with the relocation and expansion of the existing ground floor café/restaurant use to the first floor and rear extension for reception area, and the removal of existing boat sales office building and its relocation to a new building adjacent to the site access'*.

Those works form Phase 1 of a wider masterplan for Deacons Marina (illustrated in the submitted Site Layout Plan (PA20-139:03) – the overall site masterplan). The improvements the subject of the Phase 1 planning consent support the wider vision for the Marina in terms of securing existing and creating additional employment and ensuring its long-term commercial viability.

Whilst the Marina currently benefits from on-site flood protection and a continued long-term resilience against climate change and flood risk, Boatfolk commissioned a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for the Marina which informed the proposed Phase 1 improvements.

Further phases of improvements, included in the masterplan, will be subject of future planning applications and will include:

- **Phase 2** - an extension to the flood defences into the berthholders car park and deck works on the shoreline.
- **Phase 3** - Improvements to the boatyard including a replacement commercial/workshop building and potential revisions to the previously approved replacement boatshed building.

The proposals the subject of this planning application form part of Phase 3 of the masterplan but have been brought forward by Boatfolk due to the need to replace the existing commercial/workshop building, which is no longer fit for purpose and is becoming run-down and difficult to maintain in order to meet current safety regulations.

Site and Surrounding Area

Deacons Marina Site

Marina and boatyard uses have operated from the Deacons site for nearly a century. At present the Marina can accommodate 135 berths afloat and has space for around 180 boats ashore with craneage facilities for boats up to 20 tonnes in weight and 45 feet in length.

A large part of the rationale for the acquisition of Deacons Marina was to create a boatyard service and marina to allow boatowners from the wider Solent to have a facility to bring boats for servicing on the River Hamble. Boatfolk have now owned and operated Deacons Marina for over five years and the improvements proposed as part of the masterplan and subsequent phased planning applications, have been carefully considered over this time. At present the marina, including the boatyard, offices, boat sales, tenant workshops, and café/restaurant, employs 75 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers.

The Marina is located on the northwestern side of the River Hamble to the southeast of Bursledon. The site is accessed from Bridge Road (A27) which runs to the northeast of the Marina. Trees and vegetation on the ground leading up the railway line and Bursledon Station form the northern boundary of the Marina. The Marina is a level, long and relatively narrow site (approximately 11,716sqm- excluding the river use) being widest at its interface with Bridge Road and then narrowing as you enter further into the site past Deacons House and into the boatyard area. A separate boatyard (Elephant Boatyard) is located to the southwest.

As well as the pontoons and berths, the Marina includes Deacons House (two storey including chandlery, offices, and café/restaurant), a single storey portacabin building for boat sales, parking areas, boat storage facilities, a single storey boat shed and the two-storey commercial workshop building which is proposed to be replaced via this application.

The Marina site falls within a recognised flood risk zone as identified on the Environment Agency (EA) risk mapping and falls within the Old Bursledon Conservation Area. The site is also within the EBC Local Plan designated countryside, outside of the Bursledon settlement boundary. The site is bordered by the River Hamble to the southeast, the A27/Bridge Road as it crosses the Hamble to the northeast and the mainline railway at Bursledon Station to the west.

Application Site

The site the subject of this planning application is broadly rectangular in shape, being physically defined by the boundaries of the existing two storey commercial building located along the northeast boundary of the wider Marina site. The existing building (as shown on the Site Location Plan) has a footprint of 639sqm and a gross internal floor area of 1,179sqm (over two storeys). The replacement building will virtually replace the existing like-for-like in terms of its footprint and scale and will actually result in a loss of 40sqm in floorspace overall, albeit in a more modern, user-friendly building.

Planning History

There is no relevant planning history associated with the application site itself. All planning history at Deacons Marina is related to other services and facilities such as the chandlery, pontoons, the boatyard, other potential commercial/industrial units or the site access.

Proposed Development

As mentioned above, the proposed development is a component part (part of Phase 3) of the previously outlined strategic masterplan for the site, with the application seeking consent for the replacement of the existing two storey commercial/workshop building.

The need for the replacement building is due to the poor quality/condition of the existing structure, that requires significant maintenance to preserve. The remaining lifespan of the existing building is limited and it is currently difficult for Boatfolk to maintain it in order to ensure it meets safety regulations. Therefore, Boatfolk have decided to accelerate the replacement of the building and move this development forward in the wider Marina masterplan programme.

The redeveloped building seeks to redress the shortcomings of the existing structure, albeit within a slightly smaller footprint and building mass. The proposed replacement structure will be located on the existing footprint but with a fractionally smaller footprint (1,139sqm as opposed to 1,179sqm, a reduction of 40sqm).

The replacement building will consist of five ground floor units and seven first floor units. A new berth holders shower block will also be positioned on the ground floor. The ground floor will be served by DDA compliant ramps to either end of the building leading to a front walkway. The first floor will be accessed via a central lift and external staircase and high-level front gantry.

The ground floor will be raised by approximately 1200mm from the existing ground level in order to sit above the predicted 1 in 100-year flood events in line with the site's previously approved flood risk strategy. The new floor level will align with the current level of the adjacent berth holder car park and exceeds the required levels set out in the approved Phase 1 FRA.

As explained in the submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS), the elevational appearance will be more in keeping with the nature of the Conservation Area and the building façade aligns with the marine structures in the vicinity and the wider South Coast region. The masonry lower element to the building ensures no water damage to the external structure would be suffered during flood episodes.

As the development is a like for like replacement building, there will be no change to the existing drainage provision.

The existing walls are plywood sheets overlapped. The southwest end of the building is clad in a composite panel up to about the middle of the building. The remainder of the building is rendered with black ply and profiled metal cladding on concrete walls. The roof is a composite sheet.

In terms of proposed materials, the walls to the ground floor will be red brick above fairfaced blocks with the first floor being clad with black horizontal cement cladding. The roof will be black profiled cladding and doors and windows will be black ppc aluminium. Overall, the appearance will be recessive.

Further details of the replacement building design, layout and scale can be found in the attached DAS.

Planning Context

The application site lies within the administrative area of Eastleigh Borough. Therefore, the relevant development plan is the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036), which was adopted in April 2022. The adopted Local Plan and national policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are considered below.

Development Plan

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 (Adopted April 2022)

The newly adopted Local Plan for Eastleigh Borough Council sets out the policies and plans to guide future development to 2036. The plan identifies how much development is required and key locations for this development, the infrastructure and services needed to support new and existing communities and areas which will be protected from development.

The plan replaces all the previously saved policies of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001 - 2011) and makes provision for future needs in the Borough up to 2036.

It is noteworthy that the newly adopted Local Plan includes a virtually identical policy as the previous plan (Local Plan (2001-2011) in relation to boatyard and marina sites on the River Hamble. Other policies below in relation to flood risk and heritage assets are also similar to the policy context provided by the previous plan.

Policy DM20 – Boatyard and Marina Sites on the River Hamble

Policy DM20 states that:

‘ At boatyard and marina sites on the River Hamble (as shown on the policies map) the Borough Council will permit development associated with boat building, and the fitting out, maintenance and repair of boats and ancillary uses, provided that it does not:

- i. jeopardise the safety and ease of navigation on the river or have a detrimental impact on the regime of the river;*
- ii. adversely affect nature conservation, landscape or heritage interests; or*
- iii. cause a reduction in water quality’*

The supporting text to the policy, at paragraph 5.104, recognises that *‘the boatyards on the River Hamble lie outside the defined urban edge but that they make an important contribution to the economy of the Borough and the sub- region, and are important for tourism and recreation. As such the Local Plan recognises that it is important that they are retained in this use, and that they are able to evolve and change to accommodate and develop new technology, provided they do not have an adverse impact on the sensitive environment of the river.’*

Policy DM5 – Managing Flood Risk

Policy DM5 of the Local Plan states that *‘Development will only be permitted within the areas at risk of flooding, now and in the future, as identified on the EA most recent flood maps and the Council’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment provided that:*

- a. it meets the sequential and exception test (where required) as outlined in Government guidance;*
- b. a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that the development, including the access, will be safe without increasing flooding elsewhere, and where possible, will reduce flood risk overall;*
- c. the scheme incorporates flood protection, flood resilience and resistance measures appropriate to the character and biodiversity of the area and the specific requirements of the site;*
- d. appropriate flood warning and evacuation plans are in place; and*
- e. new site drainage systems are designed taking account of events which exceed the normal design standard.*

The policy goes on to state that *‘Development should not increase flooding elsewhere.’*

Policy DM12 – Heritage Assets

Policy DM12 states that *‘The Borough Council will conserve and enhance the Borough’s heritage assets through:*

- i. Identifying the assets by means of an on-going programme of survey and review;*
- ii. Identifying their key features and measures to manage and enhance these, e.g. through conservation area appraisals;*
- iii. Restricting development likely to harm them or their settings through management of development proposals; and*
- iv. Encouraging development that enhances them, ensures their long-term management and maintenance and where possible, enables public enjoyment and interpretation of the asset.*

Development of a heritage asset or within their setting will be permitted provided:

- i. it does not harm or detract from the significance or special interest of the asset and sustains and enhances its special character and qualities. The more important the asset, the greater the weight that should be accorded to this criterion. Permission for development which results in substantial harm to, or loss of, designated assets of the highest significance will be exceptional. Development which involves the demolition or destruction of any part of other heritage assets will not be permitted unless its removal or replacement would enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset. In these circumstances, the developer will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost, in a manner appropriate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence publicly accessible. Development that affects an archaeological site either above or below ground that is already identified or discovered through development proposals will only be permitted provided: a. if the remains cannot be preserved in situ, the clear and convincing overriding public benefits of the development that cannot be achieved by any other means is sufficient to outweigh the value of the remains; and b. prior to the commencement of the development, provision has been made for a programme of archaeological investigation and recording and for this evidence to be made publicly accessible;*
- ii. it achieves a high standard of design which respects and complements the character and qualities of the heritage asset(s);*
- iii. where necessary, it secures the long-term future maintenance and management of the asset;*
- iv. where possible, it enables public enjoyment and interpretation of the asset; and*

v. a heritage statement is submitted with the application explaining the significance of the assets affected including the contribution made by their setting, at a level of detail proportionate to the asset's significance; the impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset; and how proposals have been developed to avoid harm or, if this is not possible, minimise the harm; with mitigation measures proposed. In permitting development involving a heritage asset the Borough Council may seek a legal agreement to secure the long-term management and enhancement of the asset.

Strategic Policy S4 – Employment Provision

To contribute towards sustainable economic growth, provision will be made for additional floor space for uses in the B Use Classes (B1, B2 and B8) and other employment-generating uses through:

- i. mixed-use regeneration and greenfield development at Eastleigh River Side, supported by the delivery of the Chickenhall Lane link road (see E6, Chapter 6, section 6.4);*
- ii. further employment development adjoining Chalcroft Business Park, subject to the provision of a new road link between the distribution park and Bubb Lane (see policies WE1 and WE2, Chapter 6, section 6.5);*
- iii. small-scale employment allocations at Botley, Bursledon, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Fair Oak (Horton Heath), Hedge End and West End (see Chapter 6);*
- iv. new employment development within the urban edge and by the re-use and/or redevelopment of buildings in the countryside (policies DM18 and DM19, Chapter 5);*
- v. retaining existing employment sites which have the potential to contribute towards future employment needs, and intensifying their use (see policy DM15, Chapter 5);*
- vi. regeneration of Eastleigh town centre in accordance with the Council's 'Eastleigh Town Centre Vision' (see policies E3 and E4, Chapter 6, section 6.4) and of district and local centres, to include retail, office, leisure, cultural and residential development (policies DM21). This will include the restriction of out-of centre retail and office development.*

This proposal clearly aligns with (v) above.

The Borough's employment strategy also seeks a greater presence of high-value growth industries, building on the Borough's existing economic strengths in the marine, aviation, rail, creative industries, financial and business sectors, whilst also being open to support new growth industries including low carbon and high technology businesses, and businesses that support the development of a low carbon economy; as well as supporting the creation of jobs in forms of employment other than industry and commerce, for example in retail, leisure and cultural activities, education and health services, provided they do not compromise the contribution that existing businesses and sites make to the economy (our underlining).

National Planning Policy

A revised edition of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Two of the objectives of the NPPF were to simplify national planning policy and support and encourage sustainable economic development.

Paragraph 11 makes clear that '*Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development*'. It is also made explicit that in making decisions on planning applications this means:

- '*approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
 - *where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:*
- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

- ii. *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole*’.

Paragraph 38 of the NPPF confirms that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

Paragraph 82 goes on to state that planning policies should, inter alia, be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances and **Paragraph 83** confirms that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

In relation to planning for climate change, **paragraph 153** confirms that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, amongst other things and **paragraph 154** confirms that new development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change.

More specifically in relation to flood risk, **paragraph 159** states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future) but where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

In areas of flood risk **paragraphs 164** and **167** require that applications be informed by a site-specific flood risk assessment that demonstrates that: a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

With regard to heritage assets, **paragraph 202** states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal and **paragraph 207** confirms that not all elements of a Conservation Area necessarily contribute to its significance.

Policy Analysis and Conclusion

The proposed development is in full accordance with the Eastleigh Local Plan and relevant national planning policy. Notably, local planning policy emphasises the importance of marina businesses to the local and wider economy (Policy DM20 of the adopted Local Plan).

The replacement building represents an improvement to an existing operation in accordance with Boatfolk’s aspirations for its marina businesses. The proposed replacement structure whilst resulting in slightly reduced floorspace, will provide better useable space of a modern standard as the existing building is dated and is becoming run-down and is difficult to maintain in order to meet safety standards. It therefore requires urgent attention and improvement hence Boatfolk bringing its redevelopment forward in relation to its planned masterplan phasing. The proposed development will also result in improved, modern wash facilities for the berth holders.

Whilst the application site lies within designated countryside, a flood risk zone and conservation area, its position on an existing, well-established operational marina site, in conjunction with its sensitive design, taking into account flood future-proofing in terms of floor level mean that the proposed development would result in substantial improvements in all regards.

With regard to the prevailing planning policy context, therefore, the pertinent facts are as follows:

- The principle of the proposed use at this long-established marina site and the associated contextual improvements are fully supported by adopted **Local Plan Policy DM20**.
- EBC’s Employment Land Review shows that between 2016 and 2036, there is a need for around 144,050sq.m net additional employment floorspace to accommodate future economic growth (as set out in **Strategic Policy S2** Approach to new development of the LDP). **Strategic Policy S4** also promotes

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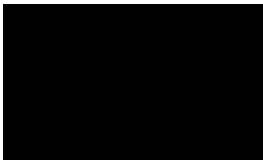
employment provision within the Borough. The economic prosperity of the local area will be improved through an increase in the current workforce. The existing 13 units, predominantly used for storage and manufacturing purposes average three employees per unit, therefore, 39 current employees. The proposed six ground floor units will maintain the three workers per unit average whereas the seven first floor units are expected to accommodate five workers per unit, therefore resulting in a proposed workforce of 53 staff. This would result in job creation of 14, as a result of the proposed development.

- The replacement building design includes integral flood defence measures to achieve resilience in terms of flood risk, taking into account the potential impacts of climate change, fully in accordance with **Policy DM5** of the adopted Local Plan. The site is located within Flood Zone 2 (deemed medium risk by the EA) and the NPPF confirms that the proposed use (which is actually a replacement of the existing use) is '*less vulnerable*' which is appropriate in such a zone, especially in a marina environment.
- The proposed replacement building will visually preserve and enhance the character/appearance of the Old Bursledon Conservation Area in accordance with **Policy DM12** of the adopted Local Plan by replacing a run-down building with a more appropriately designed, modern building.
- The replacement building will have no adverse effect on highway safety, parking or access within or surrounding the site.
- Similarly, the proposed replacement building will not have any adverse effects on residential amenity.

To conclude, we are of the opinion that the replacement building will offer an improved, safer, more sustainable and user-friendly structure in accordance with Boatfolks aspirations for Deacons Marina and national and local planning policy.

We trust, therefore, that this application is in order and look forward to confirmation of receipt and its positive determination in due course. However, should you require any further information during your consideration of the application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,
for RPS Group Limited



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