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RE Planning Application for Floating Pontoon between Mooring Piles between V18 and 19 –
River Hamble – Opposite Swanwick Marina

Mooring piles V18 and 19 are on the west side of the river between Lands End Road and Swanwick Marina. The mooring piles are maintained by The Crown Estate and managed by the River Hamble Harbour Master.

Currently the boats between piles V18 and 19 are moored to the piles just with ropes. Most other piles in the vicinity have been fitted with floating pontoons between the piles, which separate the two boats. These pontoons are secured to the piles by heavy duty chains. The boats are tied to the piles and to the pontoons but not to each other.

This means that on these pontoons, each pair of boats (including their mast and rigging) is kept further apart. The boats do not roll against each other in strong winds and damage is considerably reduced. On non-pontoon pile moorings the contra rolling motion between the boats can allow the mast and rigging to collide and can push the inflatable fenders upwards, out of the gap between the boats and the sides of the boats can collide.

It is much safer for a boat approaching a pile mooring to attach to a pontoon, rather than pick up mooring lines from the water. Mooring lines are difficult to pick up in strong winds and at night. It is easy to tangle the boats propeller in the mooring lines as these are suspended just below the water surface. As the pontoon is normally lower than the boats deck, it is also safer to load and unload the boat from a dinghy via a pontoon rather than directly from the dinghy.

The proposed pontoon is 12 metres long x 2.0 metres wide and would be located between V18 and 19 piles which are 16 metres apart. These piles cannot be accessed by land. The proposed pontoon is constructed primarily of pressure treated wood with galvanised steel brackets. The eight floats are made from polyethylene and are filled with foam. The pontoon's surface sits approx 0.5 metres above the water, 12 metres x 2.0 metres is within the recommended size range for piles 16 meters apart.

I have consulted my fellow berth holder Dave Gardner. He is happy for me to obtain permission and for us to then share the costs to install and maintain the pontoon. I have also talked to the River Hamble Harbour Authority who have no objection for a pontoon of this size between piles V18 and 19. And I have also notified the Crown Estate's Agent, 'Carter Jonas', of our wish to add a pontoon in this location, who also have no objections.

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