

HAMBLE-LE-RICE PARISH COUNCIL



Parish Council Office
2 High Street
Hamble-Le-Rice
Southampton S031 4JE
clerk@hamblepc.org.uk
02380 453422

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Dear Kristi

Apologies for the delay in replying to emailed correspondence of the 24th January 2018. The council has now established a planning committee which had its first meeting on the 26th February 2018 at which they considered your letter and associated documents.

I was able to confirm to them that we had had separate correspondence regarding the We R Hamble data and you now had the correct information relating to the total number of respondents.

In their deliberations the Committee made a number of comments relating to the tone of the documentation which they felt overstated the support for the proposals. For example the SCI seemed to indicate that because people in our survey attached a high level of importance to outdoor activity that somehow this number could be extrapolated to imply support for the emerging proposals at Mercury.

Although I am sure the intention was to highlight trends, the Council is concerned about the use of the survey results in this way, not least as the questions were about what was currently on offer and what was valued not what people were seeking more of. I think residents would be uncomfortable if they thought answers from one exercise were being used for something unrelated. Perhaps you could bear this in mind.

Concerns were also expressed about the portrayal of the current site as an area that was run down and in need of regenerating. This indicated that the current provision was outdated/outmoded and was in need of change/replacement. Members felt that this was not necessarily the case and that the current situation was as much a reflection of the current uncertainty with the site, historic underinvestment and the non-renewal of some leases. The absence of investment in the site over a sustained period of time is likely to be a more significant factor in the future viability of the site than any other factor. It is understood that the marina is currently running at capacity and is very popular with sail enthusiasts due to the rural nature of the site which is unique in Hamble. The removal of services such as the lifting facility will inevitably reduce the number of customers and have a detrimental impact on businesses based in Mercury such as Hamble School of Yachting. There needs to be an honest assessment of this. Management practice will inevitably affect the popularity of the site and the numbers using it. It is not automatically due a lack of popularity or the market.

It was also felt that the situation had been exacerbated by the fact that the Planning Consents that had been secured over recent years had not been built out. This would have resulted in a more timely renewal of assets rather than allowing for their deterioration.

In terms of the 'Key Facts Documents' the Council had the following observations

- HPC believe that Mercury Marina is well used and, in fact, at full capacity at present. This reflects feedback from staff on the site.
- Planning Policy: the Council does not consider the site to be in conformity with the NPPF as part of the site is designated as strategic gap (Countryside gap in the emerging Local Plan). Furthermore proposals that reduce the traditional boat building/boat yard functions would be harmful to the local economy.
- Enabling Homes: The emerging Local Plan has allocated sufficient housing land to meet the Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment without residential housing on this site. Ahead of the Plans adoption the council has been able, at appeal, to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. Although it is understood that the houses generate the capital needed to enable the development it is not required to meet an outstanding housing requirement.
- Transport: As you are aware traffic movements along Hamble Lane and Satchell Lane remain a real concern for local people. The site will inevitably result in additional car movements along Hamble Lane if there is housing provision on the site. The Council will want to be assured that there is not an increase in car movements on the local road network and currently the proposals do not seem to go far enough to ensure this. The suggestion of an 'electric vehicle' to transport people to Hamble village centre recognises that as a residential site it is not sustainable. When the Doctors Surgery was built a similar arrangement was proposed and did not happen. Development should be sustainable in location terms not through measures that can change over time.

I hope this helps to clarify the Council's current thinking on the site and the Committee would be very happy for you to attend and update them further on the proposals and the issues that have been raised. We do recognise the special nature of the site and understand the future challenges for it.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Jobling
Clerk