

**From:** Gary Ollivant [REDACTED]  
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**To:** Planning Policy Internet  
**Subject:** Gosport Waterfront and Town Centre SPD Consultation Draft feedback.

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Firstly I must say that I don't think the council have done a great job in promoting this consultation as many I have spoken to have not heard about it and the online form option to give feedback seems overly complicated and in too bureaucratic a language that could easily intimidate and confuse people.

My thoughts:

1. I would hope that this happens anyway with such a big development, but please liaise and plan with all the water, gas, electric, telecommunication companies, highways agency etc. to align service works and upgrades as part of this plan to minimise disruptions in the local area. Better to get it all done at once and potentially more economical, with less hassle.
2. Though I agree that more housing is needed in the area, especially for future generations and first time buyers, it must be well planned and more importantly affordable for the residents of Gosport. Please avoid so called "luxury" apartments and houses and focus on development of affordable homes for local families who are increasingly being priced out of living in this area. I would argue that the town centre area should be more focused on retail rather than residential

though and that efforts should be made to encourage more of the wider Gosport's small businesses to move into or closer to the high street if possible and commercially viable.

3. The plans to build on some of the car park space in the town seem ill thought through if the overall plan is to attract more people to the area through retail and residential building. Future capacity needs to be considered more carefully.
4. I see it is already mentioned in the draft, but just to reinforce the point, electric car charge points will quickly become a very real issue in all town centres, so having them is a must. I would also add that the planning should incorporate future expansions of such services to avoid pitfalls later on, basically planning ahead for where they should be placed and consider having more capacity than needed now before it's a problem later.
5. There is mention of a potential "cycle hub" at the ferry for cycle hire/maintenance with no noticeable mention of the current Community Cycle Centre run by Motiv8 at the bus station site, who already offer a wonderful community focused service. The group should be given every opportunity to continue their valuable work and service at a similar nearby location to supply the very services suggested in the draft.
6. On cycling, please take this opportunity to plan a Gosport cycle network that is a shining gold standard example of what can be achieved. Fully segregated cycle lanes, secure parking facilities and a real push, to turn cycling in the area not just into an attraction for potential tourists to the area but a valid, healthy mode of transport for all the residents.
7. I have talked to many people about the proposed development and one of the clearest and consistent opinions is that the Falkland Gardens should be left as is, with the proviso that what is already there could be better maintained, like the fountain for example. I understand the urge to redevelop and turn the area into a more dramatic entrance to Gosport from the ferry, but think that the feelings of local residents should be respected on this and that the area is much loved as is and considered part of the character of Gosport.
8. I would suggest a ground floor central venue type hub as part of the development of the bus station area, with potential for being both a conference venue and to host local events, gigs etc. With the central location to transport links and sea views, I think this sort of development would be well received.
9. Local artists and small business should be invited and commissioned to contribute art sculpture pieces to be displayed in the town centre, maybe with a focal piece that helps to define the character of the area. I would suggest something like naval heritage, like what has been achieved in Bristol city centre with large dramatic works, huge decommissioned anchors etc. These aesthetics are obviously expensive, but have generally low maintenance costs and bring a cultural focus to the area.
10. Please consider opportunities for the whole of Gosport when it comes to developing the retail businesses in the town centre. I would suggest encouraging more of the businesses from places like Stoke Road, Brockhurst Road and Forton Road for example, to move closer into the town centre to create a more varied and vibrant retail centre for the area. Not only that, but it creates further opportunities to redevelop these other former retail areas to perhaps better

suiting and placing residential developments. It seems there are many businesses that avoid the town for what I assume are cost issues. Maybe smaller market style shop frontage is required for burgeoning business opportunities? Or maybe a more aggressive approach to incentives like business rates relief, pressure on landlords of empty shops or something? It seems like madness to have a high street area with a consistent supply of empty retail units when so many of Gosport's small businesses could well benefit from a better location in the town centre, and the residents would benefit from having everything conveniently in one place.

11. Related to the above point, it is absurd that the Royal Clarence Yard area remains so empty and underutilised. It's a beautiful area and the potential is obvious, but talking to people, many in the area have either never visited or didn't even know it was there! There should be a stronger link between the main town centre and the Clarence Yard area, perhaps with improved access by road and by foot (free express bus service?). There could be opportunities to run the weekly markets on the site (even as an occasional one off), or a seasonal market, to improve the visibility and vibrancy of the area. As with above, there must surely be more ways to encourage businesses to take a chance on the opportunities of the site. Ideally I think it would make an ideal location for more boutique and special interest retail businesses, though suspect that the rents involved could be too steep for such ventures from small businesses.