
Waterfront and Town Centre SDP consultation Sept 2017 GHODs response (final).pdf

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From: Philippa Dickinson [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 September 2017 13:05
To: Planning Policy Internet
Cc: Terry Rhodes
Subject: Gosport Waterfront and Town Centre SPD Consultation Draft - Response from Gosport Heritage Open Days

Dear Sirs,

On behalf of Terry Rhodes, Chair of Gosport Heritage Open Days (who is currently overseas), please find attached the GHODs response.

Terry is the main contact for GHODs in relation to this response: her contact details are included in the response and she is copied into this e-mail.

If there are any problems with this submission, please let me know. On all other matters, please contact Terry Rhodes.

Yours faithfully

Philippa Dickinson
Committee Member
Gosport Heritage Open Days
www.gosportheritage.co.uk

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

29 September 2017

GOSPORT WATERFRONT AND TOWN CENTRE SPD DRAFT CONSULTATION: GOSPORT HERITAGE OPEN DAYS RESPONSE

Gosport Heritage Open Days (GHODs) is a Voluntary Unincorporated Association with the following constitutional Mission:

To promote interest and participation in Heritage related activities by providing a sustainable management and advisory facility for Heritage Open Days (HODs) events and other local heritage projects in the Borough of Gosport.

GHODs was established 25 years ago. We offer and facilitate events and activities during the annual national Heritage Open Days (HODs) in September. We provide voluntary project management, advice, information and training to diverse groups and organisers wishing to participate in Heritage Open Days in Gosport.

We also undertake the management of heritage related projects and activities outside of the core HODs dates as deemed appropriate by the management committee.

We actively promote, through participation in the Gosport Access Group & Disability Forum, all aspects of Inclusion and Accessibility relating to heritage projects in the Borough of Gosport.

Earlier this month, GHODs managed, co-ordinated and promoted almost 90 separate heritage events between 7-10 September, which attracted visitors from all over the South and further afield (including overseas). Visitor numbers for GHODs events 2017 were 15,000, up by 9.8% compared to 2016, which makes 2017 another record year for GHODs events.

COMMENTS ON THE VISION

1. GHODs welcomes the stated ambitions of the Vision outlined in the draft SPD, particularly the acknowledgement of the numerous heritage related events as one of Gosport's strengths.
 - 1.1. We welcome the ambition to use Gosport's assets to improve the cultural facilities and to foster public pride in the Town.
 - 1.2. We also welcome the various proposals to increase the number and variety of events to encourage tourism to Gosport. We would like to see the development of an updated strategic plan to encourage tourism to Gosport which would include events throughout the year (inc Gosport Marine Festival, GHODs, exhibitions etc). For example, in addition to GHODs and events organised by Gosport Marine Scene, the recent celebration of 'Daedalus 100' at Solent Airport in Lee-on- the Solent was an excellent illustration of a well-planned and managed event which brought visitors to Gosport Borough. We would like to see GBC

take a more proactive role in supporting and assisting big and small events throughout the year.

- 1.3. We strongly support the retention of the Tourist Information Centre and its knowledgeable staff in a location close to the bus and ferry terminal. The support this team gives to GHODs throughout the year, particularly in the run up to and including the four HODs days in September, is vitally important to our organisation. They have been a very large part of the success of GHODs over the past several years and through their efforts have contributed to the recognition of Gosport as one of the Top 10 places in England of heritage interest ([RSA 2016 Heritage Index](#)). It would be extremely difficult for GHODs to manage the huge number of heritage events without the active support of the TIC.
- 1.4. We would like to encourage GBC to consider the cultural heritage of Gosport as well as the built, naval and natural heritage (eg Jazz, cycling and other sports).
- 1.5. GHODs would like to see more done to encourage carefully managed access to the protected nature areas to encourage greater interest in the natural heritage of Gosport.
- 1.6. We would like to encourage GBC to consider the establishment of or support for training opportunities within heritage tourism (eg short courses on becoming a heritage guide). Further development of the 'Gosport Ambassadors' programme would be welcomed.
- 1.7. We welcome the proposals to improve public transport and well-marked safe cycling and pedestrian routes linking heritage sites with the main public transport links. We would welcome more efforts to reduce the reliance on personal cars by able-bodied residents and visitors as this should improve the frequent congestion on access roads into the Town which is a disincentive to visitors. We also welcome the proposals to add to the water transport options for residents and visitors from Royal Clarence Yard, which could help reduce the reliance on cars coming into the centre to drop off or pick up at the Ferry/Bus terminal.
- 1.8. We are concerned that the Vision contains very little on the need to improve access and inclusion for those with disabilities and special needs and feel this should be addressed in the final document.

COMMENTS ON THE STATED STRENGTHS

2. GHODs agrees with most of the Strengths outlined in the draft SPD.
 - 2.1. Our comments about the need for an updated strategic plan for tourism and the vital role of the TIC in the success of GHODs is noted in 1.2 and 1.3 above.
 - 2.2. Our comments re public transport are included in 1.7 above.

COMMENTS ON THE STATED WEAKNESSES

3. GHODs agrees with most of the stated Weaknesses. However, the lack of adequate provision for those with disabilities and special needs should also be listed as a Weakness which needs to be addressed. We would strongly recommend that the Gosport Access Group and Disability Forum

should be specifically asked to advise on opportunities to improve access in the area covered by the SPD.

- 3.1. Tourism: Our comments about the need for an updated strategic plan for tourism and the vital role of the TIC in the success of GHODs is noted in 1.2 and 1.3 above.
- 3.2. Our comments re public transport are included in 1.7 above.

COMMENTS ON THE STATED OPPORTUNITIES

4. GHODs agrees with most of the stated Opportunities, particularly the opportunities presented by the redevelopment of unused and underutilised sites, providing that provision is made that some public or occasional access for specialist interest groups by arrangement (such as during GHODs) is included in any planning permission to be granted.
 - 4.1. Tourism:
 - 4.1.1. We would like to see GHODs listed alongside Gosport Marine Scene as a named organisation to be assisted in the organisation of events along the Waterfront.
 - 4.1.2. Our comments about the need for an updated strategic plan for tourism and the vital role of the TIC in the success of GHODs is noted in 1.2 and 1.3 above.
 - 4.2. Transport: Our comments re public transport are included in 1.7 above.

COMMENTS ON THE STATED CHALLENGES

5. GHODs agrees with most of the stated Challenges.
 - 5.1. Tourism & Events (and Skills): Many of the cultural and heritage events which happen under the GHODs umbrella are only made possible by the large number of enthusiastic volunteers who generously give up their time to organise their events, make sure that the venue meets H&S requirements and then offer to guide visitors. It is a tribute to these largely retired and (mostly) untrained volunteers that GHODs receives so much positive feedback from visitors. There is a real challenge facing Gosport and GHODs as a significant part of this cohort of volunteers age and find that they are no longer able (or willing) to make themselves available to do this work. There is a real challenge in recruiting and training of new, younger heritage guides to carry on this important work on behalf of Gosport.

THEME A: CREATING AN ATTRACTIVE TOWNSCAPE

6. GHODs agrees with most of the stated objectives. We particularly welcome the proposals to open up the former Gosport Lines and to create safe pedestrian and cycle linkages.

THEME B: CREATING NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

7. GHODs agrees with most of the stated objectives.

- 7.1. We suggest that 'heritage tourism' could be included in the main 'tourism' objective.
- 7.2. Our comments on training opportunities are included in paras 1.6 and 5.1 above.
- 7.3. We welcome the proposal to create themed walking routes which we would be happy to promote during GHODs.

THEME C: ENHANCING THE SHOPPING AND LEISURE EXPERIENCE

8. GHODs agrees with most of the stated objectives, particularly the objective to enhance the cultural offer. The idea of a 'cultural square' is welcomed (eg around the Old Grammar School).

THEME E: IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

9. GHODs welcomes the stated objectives to improve connectivity, crossings, cycle access, signage, wayfinding and street design.
 - 9.1. We particularly welcome the proposals for the Millennium Promenade to run more closely along the Waterfront as originally intended, and the proposal to create a circular link with the Gosport Lines.
 - 9.2. However, we have major concerns that this Accessibility Theme is weak on the topic of accessibility and inclusion solutions for those with disabilities and special needs. This is not just about dropped kerbs and benches. This gap in the plan needs to be properly addressed. See our comments at paras 1.8 and 3.

THEME F: IMPROVING THE PUBLIC REALM AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

10. GHODs welcomes the objectives listed within this theme and has nothing further to add beyond the comments already made in paras 1.5 above.

THEME G: MANAGING FLOOD RISK

11. GHODs has no comment to make in relation to this theme beyond welcoming measures to protect the people and the heritage assets of the Town.

THEME H: PROVIDING APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE

12. GHODs welcomes the objectives listed within this theme. However:
 - 12.1. We have concerns about some of the calculations in the proposals for car-parking and wonder whether these have taken full account of a) the need to provide visitor parking close to heritage assets, particularly to the north and North-east of the SPD area; b) the inexorable growth in private car ownership; and c) the needs of blue-badge drivers.
 - 12.2. Our other comments are already made in paras 1.7 and 1.8 above.

THEME J: CREATING A HEALTHIER TOWN

13. GHODs welcomes the objectives set out under this theme.
 - 13.1. We welcome the inclusion of much improved safe cycle routes and pedestrian walkways linking the most interesting areas of the Town.
 - 13.2. The creation of heritage themed walks is particularly welcomed and (as previously stated in para 7.3) we would be willing to assist in the development and promotion of these walks. The guided walks we run during GHODs each year and at other times are always very popular.

CHARACTER AREA 1: BUS STATION AND FALKLAND GARDENS

14. GHODs welcomes most of the objectives set out for this Character Area. However:
 - 14.1. We are not in favour of the suggestion that any further tall buildings should be permitted as we believe this could damage the character of the Waterfront and Town – and also restrict public views of the Harbour.
 - 14.2. Our comments about the importance of retaining the TIC as close as possible to the Bus and Ferry terminal are already set out in para 1.4 above.

CHARACTER AREA 2: GOSPORT WATERFRONT

15. GHODs welcomes most of the objectives set out for this Character Area. However:
 - 15.1. As stated in para 14.1, we are not in favour of the suggestion that any further tall buildings should be permitted as we believe this could damage the character of the Waterfront and Town – and also restrict public views of the Harbour.

CHARACTER AREA 3: ROYAL CLARENCE YARD

16. GHODs welcomes most of the objectives set out for this Character Area. However:
 - 16.1. We urge GBC to ensure that with the anticipated opening up and redevelopment of most of the retained land at RCY, measures are put in place to ensure that the former Royal Naval Victualling Yard should be finally regarded as a coherent whole (not developed piecemeal as hitherto). This is a hugely important heritage asset and potential tourist attraction for Gosport, which should not be squandered. Royal William Yard in Plymouth, the only other remaining Victualling Yard from this period, provides a good example of what can be achieved. And Gosport also has the added value to its heritage tourism offer in the connection with Queen Victoria via the remains of her railway station at RCY.
 - 16.2. GHODs has concerns about the proposal to add parking into Brewhouse Square, as this could damage the appearance of what is currently an attractive pedestrianised area. We also doubt whether this proposal is practical given the constraints of the already overly complex parking arrangements at RCY.

CHARACTER AREA 4: NORTH OF HIGH STREET

17. GHODs supports the objectives set out for this Character Area.

CHARACTER AREA 5: HIGH STREET

18. GHODs supports the objectives set out for this Character Area, particularly the proposals to encourage the use of empty retail units for arts and community projects and pop-up events. We also support the proposal for a programme of events in and around the Town Centre, which would include some heritage events. Our comments about the need for a strategic plan for the development of tourism and year-round events are included at para 1.2 above.

CHARACTER AREA 6: SOUTH STREET

19. GHODs supports the objectives set out for this Character Area.

CHARACTER AREA 7: TRINITY GREEN AREA

20. GHODs supports the objectives set out for this Character Area, particularly the emphasis on the need to protect and enhance the setting of both the Grade II* listed Trinity Church and the Vicarage.

20.1. We have concerns about any further new/modern development in this area.

20.2. We welcome proposals to use the Millennium Time Space more proactively and the possibility of temporary pods for events.

CHARACTER AREA 8: HASLAR MARINA

21. GHODs supports the objectives set out for this Character Area, particularly the emphasis on the need to respect the setting of Bastion No 1 and the views across Haslar Lake.

CHARACTER AREA 9: GOSPORT LINES

22. GHODs supports the objectives set out for this Character Area, particularly the proposals for the opening up of the remaining parts of the former Gosport Lines to include a pedestrian route which follows the Lines and also links up with the route of the Millennium Promenade. We also welcome the proposals for enhancing and improving the routes to and through the Scheduled Ancient Monument, No 1 Bastion.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS: CONCERNS

23. GHODs has no particular concerns beyond those already mentioned earlier in this response.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS: OTHER SITES WITHIN THE SDP WITH POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT

24. We are aware that the future of the Nicholson Hall in Stoke Road is somewhat uncertain. We consider this to be an interesting building in a useful location, which could provide opportunities for community groups and events.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS: ANYTHING ELSE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL VERSION OF THE SPD?

25. GHODs would like to suggest the following possible heritage assets which currently sit outside the SDP could usefully be added in order to provide a coherent approach to elements which are linked to assets within the SDP:

25.1. The Priddy's Hard Ramparts Area: natural historic connection with Northern Ramparts and the Gosport Lines.

25.2. The Forton Lake/Creek shoreline: has many interesting features, wrecks and areas of natural habitat and forms part of the Gosport Waterfront, the Millennium Promenade and the proposed Coastal Path. The shoreline walks run in recent years by [CITIZAN](#) for GHODs in this area are always popular.

ANY FURTHER COMMENTS?

26. No further comments

CONTACT DETAILS

Name: Terry Rhodes

Title/Role: Chair

Organisation: Gosport Heritage Open Days

Address: c/o Gosport Tourist Information Centre

Bus Station Complex

