



Planning and Policy Department
Gosport Borough Council
Town Hall
High Street
Gosport
Hants PO12 1EB

7th September 2017

**Re: Gosport Waterfront and Town Centre Supplementary
Planning Document - Consultation Draft June 2017**

Dear Sirs

I write in my capacity as Commodore of the Gosport Model Yacht and Boat Club, which club celebrated its centenary in 2013.

I wish on behalf of the club to make the following comments in accordance with the Consultation Draft document.

It would appear that there is no intention to cause harm to either of the south and north lakes of the existing Cockle Pond in the Walpole Park area, about which the club is naturally encouraged.

There appears reference to maintenance of the Car Parking area immediately adjacent to the Cockle Pond and again this is a matter of encouragement to the club as depending upon the nature and duration of events, car parking in the immediate vicinity of the Cockle Pond lakes and of both short and longer term nature is essential.

Area 6 (South Street) identified on Plan 1, especially in relation to that part on the South side of South Street is however of particular concern to the club.

The area, currently used as the upper Car Park level is used by club members and visitors, and if this were to be the subject of development in the manner of high density mixed height residential blocks (Area Objectives point 6), not only would that effect a

reduction in Car Parking space, but it will undoubtedly materially and adversely affect the direction and strength of wind, causing much distortion.

As will be fully appreciated, for any sailing activity a clear and 'clean' wind is an essential criterion, and this applies equally for our club in all its Model Yachting activities.

As already mentioned the club has had its established base at the Cackle Pond site for over 100 years.

It has a programme of events both local, national, and international unsurpassed throughout the United Kingdom and is a source of revenue for local businesses from the numerous visitors to the club when events are hosted.

The status of such events is that Gosport is viewed among the Model Yachting community as a prime location for hosting Championships and Regattas of National status, and indeed beyond to International Status.

World Championships are the pinnacle of any sport and Gosport's Cackle Pond has been the venue for such in the past and hopefully will be a choice of sailors in the future.

Whilst the prevailing wind direction is typically south westerly, there are many occasions when wind from any element of north is already less consistent, and any development closer to the lakes will make that situation worse, thus risking Gosport's reputation as one of the largest and most important locations and facilities in the Sport of Model Yachting.

By way of example, there are sailing events held on 5 days every week throughout the year, using both the north and south lakes, providing well over 300 days of sporting activity (and indeed excellent exercise) for all those involved.

It is noted within the Summary Booklet that there is reference to Improving Public Realm and Green Infrastructure Provision, in particular to 'Promoting a greater range of recreational activities and encourage events'.

The club is fully supportive of this both in its principles and in its activities but the possible development referred to above would almost certainly have a detrimental effect.

The passage of time without regular and sufficient maintenance of the depth of water (by reduction of silt levels within the Cackle

Ponds) in the Cockle Ponds means that certain classes of Model Yachting have already been lost and it is hoped that budgetary provision will be incorporated for that deterioration to be arrested. In recent years an attempt to clean up the north lake of the Cockle Pond by the removal of significant amounts of built up silt was made and it is hoped that further work on this and the possible excavation of silt build up in the South Lake is something that can be incorporated within any plans.

Should there be clarification needed on any of the matters related above, I or one of my committee will be more than pleased to respond, and indeed we would wish to be involved at all times when matters are discussed within relevant meetings and forums that relate to the Cockle Pond area.

Yours faithfully

Chris Durant

Commodore, Gosport Model Yacht and Boat Club
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<http://www.gosportmybc.club/index.html>

