



## **Assessment of Project Need**

Project : Piles Moorings on the Hamble River  
9476/Ass/jhb

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### **Description :-**

#### **Hamble River Sailing Club**

This application relates to a Hamble River Sailing Club proposal, in conjunction with the Crown Estate, to remove an area of fore-and-aft moorings and replace them with three lengths of continuous pile and pontoon moorings on the Hamble village side of the River Hamble as shown in the attached plans FA EG-9476.00/3000 and 3001

The area lies outside the main channel of the River and is currently the site of 6 fore-and-aft buoyed moorings which are fixed by a mix of ground chains and sinkers. They have the capacity to accommodate up to 12 vessels. Depths in the area range from 2 to 2.8 metres at Chart Datum. The upstream end of the proposed pontoons lies of the end of the Hamble Ferry Hard and this causes localised increases in the tidal stream in the area.

These moorings are operated by Hamble River Sailing Club and are used by boats belonging to Club members. The existing buoys are secured by chain risers - the effective length of the chain will vary over the tidal cycle which means that the location of the craft on these moorings will move in plan over the tidal cycle. The movement of the existing moorings has a knock on effect on the available width of the access channels and the buoys can be submerged at some states of the tide, making navigation hazardous.

The proposal is to lift the existing moorings and ground tackle and replace them with a pile and pontoon system split into three sections with 10 metre gaps between them to enhance access to and from the moorings, and for the passage of small craft. The proposal is not intended to increase the total number of moorings.

The proposed project has a number of potential benefits for River users:

- Secure pontoon moorings for existing mooring holders.
- No intended increase in the total number of moorings in the area.
- Enhanced navigational safety resulting from removal of buoys and associated pick-up lines which cause a hazard to vessels which stray out of the main channel, and to sailing dinghies.

The proposed scheme involves driving nine (9) new piles, using the vibro method. These will be connected with pontoon structures to form the three separate mooring pontoons. If approved, the works will be carried out during the winter months (in line with accepted practice) to minimise the environmental impact of the piling works. The existing moorings will be removed before piling work commences.

The proposed scheme will require the approval of the various statutory regulators: the Marine Management Organisation, The River Hamble Harbour Authority and the Environment Agency.

The concept and layout has been developed to comply with the River Hamble Harbour Authority's Strategic Vision which was approved by the Harbour Board in January 2012. This Vision (para 4.3.3) states that 'Ensuring that there is sufficient space for recreational activity is important but the Board also recognises the need to balance this against demand for an

appropriate distribution of moorings and berths so that the full range of activities may take place safely’.

The area covered by this proposal lies within a Moorings Restricted Area as set out in Eastleigh Borough Council’s emerging Local Plan, the relevant sections of which are as follows:

### **Strategic Policy S9**

Enable the provision of infrastructure related to recreational sailing within the built frontages of the river, subject to the Hamble River Harbour Authority Strategic Plan and Vision, whilst protecting more sensitive locations

### **Policy DM34, Recreational sailing on the River Hamble**

On the River Hamble:

- i. new, moorings and replacement or relocation of existing moorings will only be permitted outside the mooring restriction areas shown on the policies map, and subject to the advice of the River Hamble Harbour Authority;
- ii. new jetties, slipways, pontoons, landing stages, steps, walkways, bridges or catwalks, or extensions to such structures, will only be permitted in existing boatyards or within frontages of the river in the urban edge as defined on the policies map, provided that they do not:
  - a. impede the movement of craft or otherwise compromise navigational safety on the river; or
  - b. disrupt existing recreational uses or areas where there is existing or proposed public access; or
  - c. adversely affect the nature conservation, landscape or heritage value of the River Hamble.

This proposal does not seek to increase the number of previously approved moorings in the area because the proposed layout will have space for the same number of vessels. Thus, the Harbour Authority’s current limit on mooring numbers will not be breached. Although the proposal appears to contravene Policy DM34 (i), the view of the Harbour Master is that the improvements to navigational safety which would result if the scheme is approved would outweigh any benefits associated with this clause of the policy. The proposal will enhance movement of craft, reduce the incidents of boats becoming entangled with moorings and pick-up lines and will have a positive impact on the environment by lifting the existing mooring tackle from the River bed.

The proposed mooring area lies within the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and adjacent to the Solent & Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, and the Lee-on-Solent to Itchen Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The proposal does not involve any increase in mooring numbers and will reduce the number of mooring chains laying along the river bed. It is not anticipated that this proposal will have any adverse impact on the features for which the conservation sites were designated.

### **Methodology**

The works are to be carried out from a crane barge with all deliveries to come in by sea. The works are expected to take approximately eight to ten days. (The barge will be of similar size to that used over the past few years during the replacement of the trot piles along the river).

The proposed area lies outside the main river channel and will thus have very little impact on navigation within the River during the course of the works.

The barge movements will all be subject to approvals from the Harbour Authority and suitably lit at night. Working hours will be restricted to normal limitations. The use of Vibro techniques will ensure that noise will be kept to a minimum during the piling operation.

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