



Itchenor Jetty Development Environmental Impact Issues Statement

Development Proposal

The access pontoons at Itchenor have been identified as a development opportunity to provide increased walk ashore berthing capacity by extending the pontoon footprint in association with shoreside amenity improvements. This will improve safety and increase opportunity to provide electric charging facilities.

The new section of outer pontoon is primarily planned to increase the usability of the existing facility. It will provide a greater distance of 'touch and go' berthing for harbour users during the day and dedicated walk-ashore berthing for visitors for overnight stays. Short-stay, daytime berthing will provide safe areas for visitors and mooring holders to leave vessels while visiting the Harbour Office and local amenities such as the boatyards, Sailing Club, restaurants, and road access to Chichester. The existing inner pontoon will be shortened for use as berthing for Harbour Authority vessels and the Itchenor Ferry. The inner pontoon will provide a safe place for ferry passengers to congregate, away from the vessel movements on the outer pontoon. The existing small craft berthing for local marine businesses will also remain in place.

Works Required

The proposed plan for the extension to the Harbour Office Jetty is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1

It is planned to deliver the sections to site fully assembled with attached tubular steel pilings, which will be ready to drive into the seabed. Safety ladders, emergency cabinets, power, water and deck level safety lights will make up the finished structure. The marine works will be carried out by specialist marine contractors, construction works will be installed using a 'spud leg' barge supported by small workboats to manoeuvre the sections into place.

The proposed new 100m section of jetty, less the removal of one section of the old jetty, will add approximately 231m² to the existing jetty footprint of 342m², an overall increase in size of around 67%.

5 new pilings will be driven to fix the new jetty in place, the pilings being the only part of the new structure that will contact the seabed. Most of the works will taking place in the deep-water part of the channel, with a small change to the angle of the shore end freeing-up a small inter-tidal area.

The current jetty connects to the shore slightly above the level of Mean High Water Springs. Consequently, on many high tides there is no 'dry foot' access and this places limitations on persons accessing vessels, especially for persons requiring disabled access. Sea levels have risen faster over the last hundred years than any time in the last 3,000 years. This acceleration is expected to continue with a further 15-25cm of sea level rise expected by 2050.

To address the medium-term access issues, it is proposed to build a raised landing section with a hinged ramp connecting to the jetty, which will be canted to the east. This will facilitate dry foot access, even over high spring tides. It will also free up an area of developed intertidal which can be returned to nature.

Environmental Impact

The proposal site is within the Chichester Harbour and Langstone Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA), Solent Maritime Special Area for Conservation (SAC), Chichester Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Avoiding impacts to the designated sites is a priority.

A full ecological appraisal will take place prior to the granting of permissions for the development. Construction works will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year and in a sensitive manner to avoid significant impacts on the wintering bird assemblage, to reduce impacts to priority habitats, and part of the proposal will include reducing the footprint of existing moorings and tenders.

While the overall number of berths in the area does not change, 6 swinging moorings will be removed and move to the new pontoon, and by reconfiguring the mooring area, approximately 8,828m² of open water will be created (water area where vessels on moorings do not encroach). The removal of moorings in this area will eliminate scouring by the riser chains and will allow the seabed to return to a more natural state.

The proposed development will provide electric tenders for the use of mooring holders. It is hoped that this will encourage a decrease in the use of traditional combustion outboard engines, and by reducing the need for customers to keep tenders on the dinghy chains at Itchenor, it is proposed that the existing chain facility in the intertidal area to the east of the jetty development be reduced in size, an area of approximately 1,000m². By creating space away from the busy launching hard and the hazards posed by manoeuvring vehicles, an area can also be created for canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards to launch and recover safely. This area is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2

We believe the proposal will deliver a net gain for the environment overall, through the reduction of mooring footprint on the sub-tidal areas, the reduction of dinghy chain footprint on the inter-tidal area, the increased use of electric tenders over motorised tenders, as well as opportunity for vessels to convert to electric and recharge.