

## Estuary – Design considerations.

**These thoughts have arisen following the first meeting of the Estuary Design Group on Thursday 13 February 2005**

### Scope

Any proposals should consider the whole of the estuary front from the sea front and Marina round to the start of the East Devon Way by the Sansom's boat yard.

### Vision

What sort of town do we want? What is our vision? Without knowing this we cannot assess whether any development is likely to contribute towards achieving it.

### Evaluation

Every proposal must be evaluated under the following criteria:

- Is the development intended primarily for residents or for visitors? Developments that do not directly benefit residents should be subjected to a far more rigorous cost justification and assessment of their impact on the daily life of people within the town (e.g. Can the town cope with the anticipated influx of visitors or the impact that they may have on traffic or parking without adversely affect the pleasure that local people get from visiting their town centre?)
- We should do a SWOT analysis on all proposals
- Will it attract day trippers or longer term visitors?
- etc

### Key consideration

How can Exmouth compete with Exeter for shoppers' attention when Exeter has in its city centre extensive and expanding areas of pedestrianised shopping whilst Exmouth insists on retaining its town centre as a traffic thoroughfare? If any development of the Estuary area is to be effective we must remove traffic from the area in front of KFC and the Powder Monkey so that people can walk from the estuary parking and possible supermarket through to the pedestrianised Strand and Parade without having to negotiate cars, lorries and other traffic.

### Other considerations

- **Flooding** - Before any development is undertaken the area must be made safe from any danger of flooding in the foreseeable future taking the impact of global warming into account. (Last Autumn's Spring tide saw water spilling onto the car park at the entrance to the Recreation ground. This will involve the building of a new and higher sea wall from the Recreation Ground area through to Sansom's boatyard. (Note this sea wall should be at approximately waist height for pedestrians on the landward side). This work should be coordinated with the work to be carried out by the Environment Agency on the Recreation Ground area.
- **Space** –
  - If a new sea wall is built serious consideration should be given to land reclamation to provide more inland space for car parking etc. This should not have an adverse effect on the SSSI.
  - The "Bund" – Consideration should be given to removing the "Bund", the mound in front of Halsdon Road, as this would create more space. (The spoil could be used for the reclamation work – see above)
  - Sansom's boat yard should be resited within the town to release this space, possibly for a picnic/barbecue area at the start of the East Devon Way.
  - The lorry park should be closed and an alternative site found if it is deemed necessary to provide parking for lorries and coaches. Maer Road might be considered as it could be made secure fairly easily.

- Sports Centre -If we cannot resite swimming pool we could resite Sports Centre to release more land near town centre – Should a new larger sports centre be built near the Athletics track with shared facilities? (Is the land suitable? Or should we consider moving both elsewhere)
- Rugby pitch – Is the best use of land in this location?
- A new station should be built approximately 100 metres nearer Exeter with two lines one on either side of the platform and ticket office on the estuary side of the line. A park and ride car park should be created, possibly using the present “donkey” field alongside the football pitch. Provision must be made for buses to stop beside the station.
- Bus station – Bus storage facilities this should be moved elsewhere in the town.
- **Pedestrianisation** – Any development should involve the pedestrianisation (public transport and taxis only) of the area extending from The Strand and The Parade to, and including, the roundabout linking Marine Way and Imperial Road.
- **Traffic**
  - Traffic from Exeter Road/Marine Way needs to be routed to Langerwehe roundabout
  - The land on the landward side of the road will be a pedestrianised area right through to The Strand and The Parade (see above)
  - Thus the nearer to the estuary front that the road is routed the larger the pedestrianised/parking areas.
  - Parking should also be located on the landward side of this road so that people do not have to cross the road after parking their cars if they wish to go into the town.
  - Consideration should be given to:
    - Allowing traffic from Exeter Road to exit through the “bund” when The Parade is closed.
    - Routes currently going through the town will need to avoid the town centre when this is pedestrianised.
    - These new routes need to be identified and agreed BEFORE any more work is carried out on roads in Exmouth. Key places are the Langerwehe roundabout; Chapel Hill roundabout; Beacon Place; Bicton Place; High Street; Albion Hill and New North Road.
    - Car Parking should be penalty free, for example, pay on departure.
- **Maritime**
  - Boating/Waterside Centre - Exmouth needs improved facilities for the launching, servicing and storing of boats. Selecting the best place for these should be a top priority.
  - The Gut. Whether or not this can satisfy Exmouth’s boating needs, it should be tidied up and turned into an attractive tourist area linking the sea-front and Marina to a rejuvenated estuary side.
- **Walking/Cycling**
  - Cycling – A cycle route should lead from the sea front to join with the planned cycle route to Exeter. Another route should lead from the town centre to Phear Park through the Colony
  - Paths should be created from the sea front to the East Devon Way.
  - A boardwalk could be considered from the Marina along the Gut behind Camperdown Terrace.
- **Heritage/Shoreline Centre** – This project should be considered on the basis of its impact on Exmouth, its residents, the surrounding area and the transport infrastructure. Two sites appear worthy of consideration, on the Recreation ground or on reclaimed land near start of East Devon Way where it might project into the estuary giving panoramic views. There is more bird activity near this second site. In this location the Centre could back onto station to provide shelter for rail travellers and an impact on visitors arriving at the station. (Walk through for East Devon Way)
- **Supermarket** – If this goes ahead it should be sited opposite KFC on the site of the old railway station.
- **Other issues**
  - Town temperature – a large building opposite KFC would keep the town centre warm in the Winter just as the old railway station did by protecting the centre from cold northerly and westerly breezes coming in off the estuary.

- Coach drop off point near Langerwehe Way roundabout.

Geoff Morris – 13 February 2005