

HAYLING SEASIDE RAILWAY –
NEW DEPOT AND HERITAGE CENTRE

Design and Access Statement

In support of planning application for the construction of a new train depot.



Revision: 18th June 2014



HAYLING SEASIDE RAILWAY

NEW DEPOT

1 Location of the Proposed Development

Eastoke Corner, Seafront Hayling Island PO11 9LU

2 Date of Preparation

7 June 2014

3 Date of Amendments

Nil

3 Applicant

Hayling Seaside Railway, 20 Jasmond Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 2SY

4 Agent

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PO18 9LX

5 Background

5.1 Hayling Seaside Railway (HSR) has operated along the seafront at Hayling Island between Beachlands and Eastoke Corner since 2003. It was built following an invitation from Havant Borough Council to build a railway along the seafront. Over the last 10 years it has become an important feature of Hayling and is a recognised and respected part of the local Community and local tourism on the Island.

5.2 Since the HSR was established, its maintenance depot has been located at Beachlands adjacent to the Funland Fair. This site has served the railway reasonably well, but is far from what is basically required for a variety of reasons. The site not only lacks proper service facilities such as water, sewerage, and an independent secure power supply, but also has an insecure tenure, which is increasingly creating financial

instability and crucially making future planning and long term development more and more difficult. The HSR would like to purchase the land on which the shed is built, but the owners have confirmed in writing that they are not prepared to sell this site as it is part of their redevelopment plans, and these do not include the railway. The current lease on the land expires in November 2014, and the owners are not prepared to renew the lease beyond this date, unless planning permission for an alternative site for a depot has been granted.

5.3 Furthermore in the spring of 2012, Havant Borough Council reconfirmed its commitment to the adoption of the Hayling Seafront Master Plan as a strategic document for inclusion in its Local Development Framework, which of course has implications for the current Housing Allocations Plan (HAP).

5.4 One of the potential likely impacts of the HAP is the requirement for key locations to be incorporated into the Island's allocated housing numbers, and one of these sites is at Beachlands/Funland. This will have a direct impact on Hayling Seaside Railway operations and its depot.

5.5 It will be clear from this background, that it has become increasingly vital and now urgent, to identify an alternative site for the depot's operations along the route of the railway in order to secure its long term sustainability and security. This will enable the Railway to fulfil and develop its role in the community economically and socially, thereby assisting both the Hayling Island itself and the wider community interests of the Havant area generally, to prosper.

6 History

6.1 During discussions with Officers over the past 2 years, comments and concerns have been raised about the medium and local term viability of the railway's operations in order to sustain the expense of a new building.

6.2 The railway's history and its overall viability has been underpinned by the long term commitment shown by an army of volunteer supporters who, over a period of many years, have worked tirelessly to ensure that the railway succeeds. The railway has been developed and has succeeded, despite the various obstacles that have been put in its way. For example comparisons with the typical high street business or a public sector capital project can be very misleading. This is because there is a large amount of enthusiastic volunteer support available; this is not just from the local railway society itself but from the wider narrow gauge railway interests and the heritage railway community generally. Such support would not necessarily be available in other spheres.

6.3 The history of the Railway on Hayling Island goes back over 26 years to 1988, and a chronological timescale of events over this period, was outlined in the Railway Business Plan presented to the Council last year.

6.4 The commitment, enthusiasm, hard work and endurance of the team of volunteer supporters over this long period of time, is the reason why the railway was built and has been developed, enabling it to become what it is today, a successful operation that is loved and enjoyed by both the local community and tourists alike.

- 6.5 The seeds of the current problem with the depot at Central Beachlands were planted to a large extent back in 2002, when in order to get the railway started, a hastily prepared lease arrangement was set up with Funland, which now with hindsight was perhaps ill judged but became necessary simply to get the railway off the ground. However the support from the Council in providing a secure long term future over the land to operate the railway was and still is of course vital and appreciated. Relocating the depot to East Corner will significantly help to secure this future.

7 Development Proposals

- 7.1 The need for a new Depot and reasons are explained in Section 1 above. It is envisaged that the proposed new railway depot could be developed in two possible phases. The initial phase following planning approval, is to construct a new purpose built depot to the latest high environmental standards which would be used as the Railway's principle base of operation, such as for storage of locomotives, rolling stock, all necessary equipment, office and stores. Further information about this is explained in section 4.2 below.
- 7.2 The later phase, concerns the possible establishment of a Hayling Heritage Centre. The need for a heritage centre which focuses on the Island has long been recognised by many different groups and communities locally. Local people involved with the work of COPP's have long held an aspiration to find a base for both holding exhibitions and displaying items of memorabilia. Recent discussions with COPP's representatives have confirmed this. Similarly people involved closely with the work of coast guard and Hayling Billy 50 and railway heritage, are also keen to be able to display their work and to document their long history of contribution on the Island. There are also other groups such as wild life conservation groups (including Natural England) that have expressed keen interest in some facility to be able to display and communicate their activities.

8 New Depot Site

8.1 Preparations and consultations

- 8.1.1 Some Initial discussions about these difficulties have taken place with Councillors and Officers, and potential preferred sites identified for further investigation and development. Four locations along the route of the Railway were initially identified where it might be possible to locate a maintenance facility. The two sites at Central Beachlands and Chichester Avenue were eliminated for a several reasons largely because they were not feasible, practical and realistic. The two remaining sites at Bound Lane and Eastoke Corner were examined for further development.
- 8.1.2 In August 2012 in order to explore these thoughts and ideas further, the Railway took steps to share these and other relevant issues, with the Island Community groups and representatives together with local residents and interested parties, and sought feedback. It offered meetings with residents and issued press releases. The Railway considered it vital, that it has the widest support of the local Community before making

any changes which might have an impact, therefore prior consultation and involvement of the residents/public was essential prior to proceeding.

- 8.1.3 In February 2013, the Council requested the Railway to stop any further work on developing the Bound Lane site, as it wanted to look at other site options again, although unfortunately by this stage, the Railway had already incurred significant costs in its preparation work.
- 8.1.4 At the request of the Council, a detail Business Plan for the Depot Project was prepared, including costings and funding. Between February 2013 and January 2014 detail discussions and several meetings took place with Members and Officers about the selection of suitable location and their respective merits.
- 8.1.5 In February 2014, the Council agreed in principle to the lease of land at Eastoke Corner for a new depot, provided a planning permission was granted for a new Railway depot.
- 8.1.6 Arrangements were then made to appoint an Architect to prepare plans, and from March onwards design work continued on the proposed building. Consultations were also carried with local ward Members once a final draft of the plans had been completed and also with local Community Groups. Illustrative plans of the building were also prepared in order to help to share the impact of the proposal with the local Community and to obtain any comments and feedback. Some informal discussions took place in May, but in early June a detail consultation letter together with illustrative plans was sent to local business and residents directly effected in the Eastoke Corner immediate area seeking views on designs and colours. Any comments or feedback received will be tabulated and reported back in due course.

8.2 Activities

- 8.2.1 The primary purpose of the Depot, is to provide secure storage and protection for railway locomotives, carriages and rolling stock, together with all associated equipment needed to ensure the track, the track base, all line side equipment such as signage/crossing points etc. is maintained at a high Health and Safety level to meet the Railway Inspectorates regulations.
- 8.2.2 The depot also serves to support light maintenance work to trains and locomotives so that the Railway can function safely and provide a regular service. All heavy maintenance and engineering work is undertaken off site in a separate workshop. The depot also serves as the administrative headquarters of the Railway, acting as the office for accountancy work, crew rostering and training and all necessary support work. The current depot also incorporates the Railway Society's tourist facility shop.
- 8.2.3 One of the important features the railway provides each year both economically and culturally on Hayling Island are the Santa Specials operated for young children, which run over the December period. These specials, since their inception, are well used, loved and enjoyed by families and Schools. The present railway station and depot at Beachlands provides no scope to develop this feature which is something the railway has long wished to be able to do. The new depot would provide the facilities to enable us to enhance the Christmas and Santa experience for all children.

8.2.4 The Railway has also long held aspirations to extend the narrow gauge railway in a westerly direction towards the 'Inn on the Beach', Sinah Warren Holiday Park, the Golf Club and eventually the Ferry Boat. The owners/proprietors of these establishments have all expressed keen interest in seeing this develop. This would mean ultimately the railway would become a significant local public transport system, through connecting key local centres, where there are currently none, both for local people and visitors and to assist those with walking disabilities. Therefore with this aspiration in mind, the railway proposes to develop a new building that would be capable of accommodating sufficient rolling stock and equipment to cater for a future railway extension. However it should perhaps also be pointed out, that the needs of the existing railway do sometimes stretch present maintenance and accommodation resources to their limit.

8.2.7 The activities and aspirations proposed in the new building are entirely in keeping with the Councils key strategies and objectives as stated in its documentation for the next 5 years, 2012-2017. Therefore they would help the Council to deliver its key priorities, principles and vision particularly as regards economic growth.

9 Financial Arrangements for New Building

9.1 The overall cost of the new building, which will be built to current environmentally sensitive standards, is estimated at £70,000, the full details of which were described in the Business Plan submitted to the Council last year.

The labour involved in the manual construction and associated track levelling work is being provided in house by the East Hayling Light Railway Volunteers Group, with additional support from the wider Narrow Gauge Community.

There will be specific help from the Hampshire Narrow Gauge Railway Trust with whom we work very closely for mutual support.

Power, water & drainage needs to be provided to the Eastoke site. Southern Water and Scottish & Southern Electric have quoted for this work.

9.2 Having a new building and stable home will allow the Company to develop its potential for running special excursion trains such as 'A Christmas Special' and other specials coinciding with school holidays. Steam weekends and 'Heritage Educational' days are planned to be offered.

9.3 The Railway currently has the ability and the approval of the Office of the Railway Regulator, to operate two trains when this becomes necessary during peak times (a separate letter has already been presented to the Council concerning this). Currently the carrying capacity of the trains is limited to two carriages each. This can be increased once the new depot is constructed with two trains each pulling with three carriages. This will significantly increase overall carrying capacity and improving the income stream over the next 5 years. The ORR has indicated, provided the same safety standard regime is used, that it would be possible in the long term, to increase the number of trains to three, although clearly this is a long term strategic objective but this underlines the longer term commitment to developing the railway in the years to come.

- 9.4 Overall turnover is expected to increase over the next five years as will operating margin as a result of better utilisation of resources, increases in fares and the number of passenger trips along with improved working with local traders and increased sales of souvenirs.

The 2013 summer season produced significant growth with takings of over £38,000.

During 2014 / 2015 we do not expect passenger numbers to increase that much as resources will be diverted to establishing our new centre, but ticket price increases should ensure that turnover continues to grow. From 2015 onwards the potential for bringing on the special excursions referred to in the paragraph above should ensure a steady growth in passenger numbers.

Taking a view 10 years out at this stage is very difficult to quantify. We expect the conversations currently being held with the various heritage organisations will yield dividends in the form of opening up new investment facilities to enable a Heritage Centre to be set up within the new Depot. This will enable us to develop relationships with a wide variety of educational organisations arranging visits and increasing the usage of the railway in what are normally the quiet term time periods.

- 9.5 The restructuring of the company.

It has long been a concern that the railway depends very heavily on the individual, Bob Haddock, who had the foresight and the pioneering vision to see that a narrow gauge railway would be an ideal accompaniment to the beauty of Hayling Island seafront. It has grown from strength to strength since opening in 2003 and has carried an estimated 250,000 passengers as well as supporting and sponsoring, both financially and in kind, a varied number of National and local Charities and events. Full details of the proposals for restructuring the company were outlined in detail in the Business Plan previously referred too.

- 9.6 The Railway Proprietor has a £25,000 bond originally deposited with Havant Borough Council in 2003. At the time this was to ensure the Council had financial indemnity to cover the cost of reinstating the land etc. along the seafront should the railway, for any reason, cease operation. We believe the above changes adequately demonstrate that this bond is more than sufficient.

- 9.7 Whilst the site makes some future provision for a Heritage Centre Room to be provided at a later date, this is very much a future aspiration. The proposal is to add this later, in conjunction with other Hayling Island Community groups, with the cost met by either a Lottery bid or from other grant funding applications. We hope however that in the interim period, to include an area in the new depot building, for a pictorial display etc. by various interested organisations.

10 Benefits from a New Build.

- 10.1 Apart from removing the uncertainty over the long term sustainability for operating the Railway, new premises will also bring the following benefits:-

- bring economies in operation through reduced shunting movements,

- ability to complete repair work more effectively,
- improved and increased storage and security, particularly in being able to keep all rolling stock and equipment under cover, protected from the weather and out of sight,
- more efficient use of energy through improved insulation,
- provision of water supply and drainage facilities and secure power supply,
- The potential for the future creation of a centre for a variety of exhibitions for local events and tourist activities.
- The ability to increase souvenir sales in the shop and improve its profile, as the room would be more directly accessible in the station.

11 Key Access Issues

- 11.1 The new building will be DDA compliant (Disability Discrimination Act). All sockets and switches will be located in accordance with approved document part M and to take into account the Environment agency flood risk requirements.
- 11.2 It is also likely that there would be an increase in revenue for the Council from the car park charges due to location of the new building at Eaststoke Corner.

12 Operational Requirements

Hours of operation for the Depot will be the same as Beachlands i.e. 9am – 5pm five days per week out of season and seven days per week during Schools holidays.

The current timetable for train operations will also not change, 3 days per week (Wednesdays and weekends) throughout the year and seven days per week in the School holidays.

Current staffing requirements for operating the railway including the shop, is between 5-6 and this is likely to increase to between 6 and 8 due in part to increased opening hours for the shop and an expected increase in passenger numbers

13 Flood Risk Assessment

The development is in Flood Zone 2 and so is at risk during extreme flood events.

However as the development is not residential, the Environment Agency have no objections to a Depot being developed on this site, however, HSR will take all appropriate measures as required to protect the development during extreme flood events and will also be signing up to the Environment Agency's flood warning service.

14 Building Materials

Steel frame building, with the walls constructed of both steel sheeting and block work. The roofing materials to be corrugated tile effect sheeting and Z-Purlins with Terracotta finish resembling traditional clay tiles, providing a quick construction but with the benefit of longevity and maintenance free.

The walls to be clad with cellular PVC –u profile shiplap cladding material, using a combination of colours to reflect both its sensitive seaside location and that of a

traditional heritage railway. Final choices of colour can be dealt with by way of a condition in any planning permission granted.

15 Commitment to Maintaining a Relevant Design and Access Statement

It is intended that the Access statement be maintained and updated as work on the development progresses such as reserved matters and Building Regulations application.

16 Future Developments

- 16.1 The medium and long term future of the Railway is not especially dependent on the survival or otherwise of Funland in its present form. It is very likely there will be some form of funfair/tourism and entertainment facility at Beachlands and this will of course, be subject to any future redevelopment of the Funland site. However the railway's future (and to some extent this is already happening) is expected to be more focussed on linking different centres along a very attractive seafront, as a transport system, both for local people visitors/tourists and people with physical difficulties. Already the railway transports people from the holiday parks (from Eastoke Corner) to the Market at Beachlands. Environmental considerations are increasingly an important factor in developing transport links and rail in particular, is playing a key role nationally in this.
- 16.2 The completion of the COPP's memorial also provides travel opportunities for the railway, especially those with walking difficulties. The completion of the new walkway along the seafront westwards to the COPPS and Chichester Avenue will further augment this, and this would be strengthened further if the footway was extended to Mengham Road Halt. It is also hoped that the railway can be extended to the 'Inn on the Beach' Sinah Warren and the golf club etc. which will further open up opportunities for railway travel to Beachlands, Eastoke Corner, the market and also for example, the possibility of one way trips to the 'Inn on the Beach' namely walk one way and ride back or vice versa. These new travel opportunities are in addition to the future potential of increased journeys generated by the existence and promotion of a new Heritage Centre once provided.

17.0 Design Standards and Guidance to be followed

- 17.1 The Building will conform to all the required building regulations requirements and planning conditions. Materials will be selected to be long lasting and in keeping with the surrounding structures.

BS 8300:2001 – *Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people*, Code of Practice, BSI, 2001

Construction Design and Management Regulations 2007

18.0 Car Parking

The section of the proposed depot will be located in what is a car park at present. The current capacity of the car park is approximately 150 cars but the exact number is difficult to put a figure on because the car park is not tarmac or is not marked with car parking bays. The new depot will result in the loss of about 15 spaces.

East Stoke corner is well served with car parking and from current observations, the existing car parks are never at full capacity even in peak season.

At least up to 6 staff car parking spaces are required to operate the railway during the peak holiday period. It is intended, that as the number of car spaces required varies significantly throughout the year depending on operating requirements, that rather than allocate these six spaces, the Council provide seasonal car parking permits with the railway staff having responsibility for displaying these in their vehicles when using the car park. This will help maximise usage (and therefore income) of car parking spaces for the public.

19.0 Landscaping

It is proposed that any landscape requirements be dealt with by of a Condition attached to any permission that is granted. Landscaping will need to respect location and need for salt resistant planting.



Image 1: Existing North elevation of the site at Eastoke Corner.



Image 2: Existing East elevation of the site at Eastoke Corner.



Image 3: Existing South elevation of the site at Eastoke Corner.



Image 4: Existing West elevation of the site at Eastoke Corner.

Appendix

Flood risk letters

Copy of letter sent for consultation with local residents

Ecology report

Other relevant information