

QUEENBOROUGH CREEK MARINA PLAN

*The importance of a marina at Queenborough should **not be underestimated**; it is therefore considered that a cost effective alternative, should be seriously promoted by SBC and the Homes & communities Agency, due to the upturn in the economic outlook, and for the reasons below. (Alternative to the marina within the development, which has been dropped from the Queenborough and Rushenden regeneration master plan)*

THE ALTERNATIVE MARINA CREEK PLAN

An impounded Queenborough Creek Marina

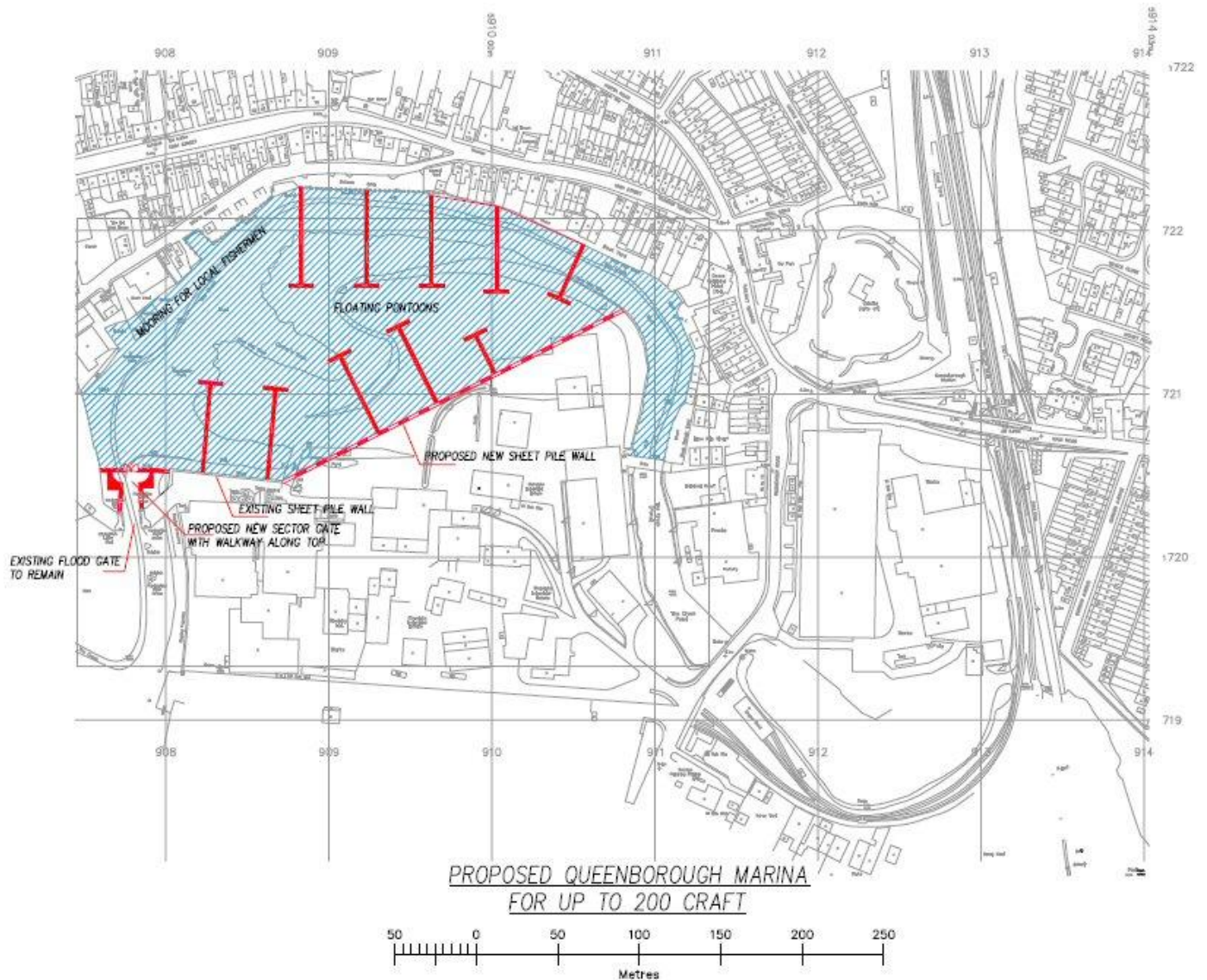
The area under consideration is bounded to the north by the existing quayside and extends southward to include Klondyke Wharf and Cutters Dock.

A sector gate will be added to impound the water in the creek

- *The main pedestrian crossing and link will be provided by the lock gate.*
- *It is anticipated that the impounded arrangement will provide navigable access/egress to the inner creek from the Swale over a four hour period each high tide and that the water level may fluctuate. This variation in water level will create **VISUAL INTEREST** and ensure that the inner creek is subject of water movement and flushing action.*
- *The Sector Gate will give additional safeguard from flooding if the existing Environment Agency gate fails to operate.*
http://www.kgal.co.uk/sector_gates_flood_defence.html
- *The Swale mooring arrangements by the Queenborough Harbour Trust will be continued and expanded, but will be enhanced by the introduction of a dedicated visitor berthing within the impounded Creek, fronting the Town Quay adjacent to South Street. The main advantages of the facility will be:-*
 - *Direct access to the shore and Queenborough Town.*
 - *Attractive to Club rallies and visiting craft from wide ranging destinations.*
 - *Berthing against pontoons with modern services.*
 - *To create public interest and focus for waterfront development.*
 - *The marina will be designed to provide 150 to 200 berths or more, varying in size.*
 - *Marina berth holders will be able to gain direct pedestrian access to Queenborough Town via the top of the lock gate. An important aspect of the marina 'offer' and viability of the marina business will be the ability to store boats ashore. It is the allocation of storage ashore space that will also help to support commercial business and attract customers and new business interests to Queenborough.*

Most of the marina development would be developed on the Southside of the creek, and especially at KLONDIKE wharf and CHALK wharf on land previously used for heavy industrial such as the Glue works. Here is where a slipway and boat storage and marine type services will be developed.

THE CREEK MARINA PLAN



CAPITAL COST

1) Sheet pile wall	£1,300,000
2) Excavation and dredging	£2,100,000 (excluding any remediation)
3) Civils for sector gate	£600,000
4) Gate	£811,000
5) Securing piles for floating pontoons	£40,000
6) pontoons	£350,000
7) Facility Building and hard standing	£350,000
TOTAL	£5,551,000

PROJECTED REVENUE

With 90 percent occupancy and maximum of 200 berths = 180 @ average mooring rate of between £209 and £306 per metre per year, with an average length boat of 9 metres

Berthing revenue	180 x 250 x 9 = £405,000
Other marina services	£100,000

TOTAL £505,000 PER ANNUM

THE CREEK MARINA FEASIBILITY STUDY

The technical and practical feasibility of a marina here, has been verified by British Waterways.

http://www2.swale.gov.uk/media/adobe/pdf/7%2Ffe%2FAppendix_8_Reduced_Size_Pages_47-71.pdf

It has been shown that this site doesn't have the planning restraints in an area designated as a Ramsar Site, or a site of special scientific interest.

As the creek is a natural watercourse its new bed level will not require to be lined, and it is assumed that the existing quay walls will not require any significant works. There is an existing entry creek from the Swale bringing water to the heart of the scheme.

Any excavated soil could be used in the levelling for minimum Ordinance Datum (OD) levels of the whole scheme.

MARINA VIABILITY

*Swale Borough Council's viability assessment, in support of its Local Plan, shows the low viability on the Isle of Sheppey, due to low house values and land values, however the judgement applied to a marina by SBC is possibly flawed and wrong, because the marina's viability should be assessed not on houses prices, but as a **separate scheme**, based on cost, the supply and demand of berths, the income generated, the jobs and business it could create, the tourism, the value and confidence it would give to an area, which in turn would increase significantly the value of housing and land around the scheme.*

Faversham, and Conyer are good examples where house prices are higher, property by creeks and waterways can command three times the going rate, Whitstable is another good example where values are higher by the exploitation of its harbour!

Sheppey needs schemes to add to the value of land and houses, by capitalising on its geographical natural assets, the Island, the harbour and the creek! The added value helps to finance infrastructure.

The Time Is Right Now for a building a Marina Because

- 1. There is an upturn in the economy.*
- 2. There is a need for jobs, new business and tourism*
- 3. There is a demand in this area for berths and marina services*
- 4. Its in one of the very few available areas that lends itself to such a development in the Swale area (Which could be lost for ever)?*
- 5. Because land is available without taking too much land away from the housing development, by this scheme.*
- 6. There is a need to increase property value in the area.*
- 7. To increase Council Tax Revenue*

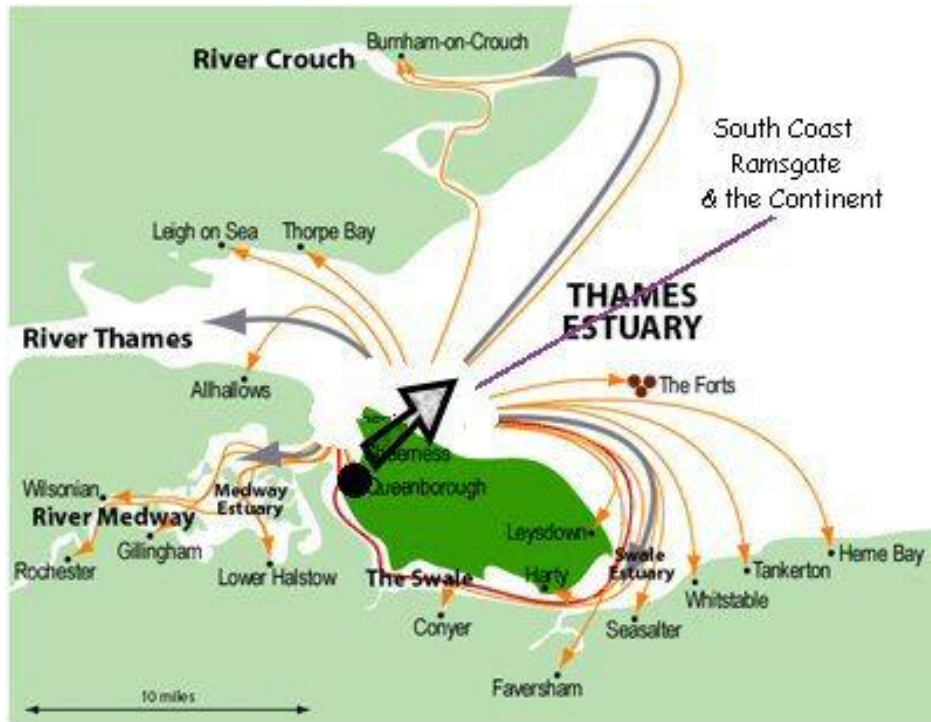
Economic Viability Assessment, Swale Borough Council Local Plan (Peter Brett Associates LLP)

*"With regard to non-residential element of the planned development, the delivery of schemes taking place is less affected by the impact of 'policy burdens' and more sensitive to **wider economic market conditions of demand and supply for such development**. The viability assessment assessed a range of speculative development scenarios, without the imposition of any planning obligations and found the schemes most likely to take place are those that have an identified client requiring specific development requirements rather than speculative delivery."*

SBC has now shown confidence in the economic upturn by supporting the £110m Regeneration of Sittingbourne High Street Scheme, and therefore the time is right to support this marina scheme, as well, which will attract international visitors to the area.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A MARINA AT QUEENBOROUGH

IMPORTANT KEY LOCATION



NEEDED RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

Much needed important resources, and services are required to bring Queenborough harbour and creek to a 21st century standard. The demand has been acknowledged by the Queenborough Harbour Trust, British Marine Federation (BMF) and other marine consultants and identified in The Queenborough and Rushenden Masterplan for Queenborough.

One and a half thousand vessels or more from France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, and even from Sweden and the USA visited Queenborough in 2013 (with inadequate facilities). However with the building up of harbour amenities by the Harbour Trust (QHT), the number of visitor will increase and add to the prosperity of the area, what is lacking is 'marina type services', land for boat repairs, lifting out boat storage, and all the associated marine activities, boat chandlers, repair workshops, bars, cafes, and restaurants that goes with a marina! Without such facilities it would be a severe setback to the QHT, to Queenborough, the harbour and the Island.

Marina

The masterplan clearly indicated the importance of a marina in the Regeneration.

*"The proposed marina will create a viable and water base activity; it will become a focus of attraction and destination in its own right with the existing attraction and historical core of Queenborough become a **KEY COMPONENT** in the development proposals"*

Waterspace

"Water should play a key part in the development of Queenborough and Rushenden and the island as a whole, the Masterplan sets out a series of principles that build on this. One of the most important proposals is for a marina and community Waterspace. This is intended to be a viable and commercially run facility with a dedicated area for community use including boat launching. The intention is to add to the facilities to complement the Harbour Trust work, with the All Tide landing, to build up the much needed capacity for mooring, repair and marine related activity.

As part of the management strategy it is intended that the proposed and existing water related activities could be brought together and managed as a whole, under the umbrella of the Queenborough Harbour Trust. This marina will also provide a focus and confidence for the regeneration proposals and will bring very important life and vitality into the scheme and confidence for business, and developers adding value to the Island and Queenborough!

Employment Tourism and Leisure

Exploiting the Island and its geographical assets

“It is anticipated that the Marina will bring employment opportunities and also act as a hub or attraction bringing international visitors to the project. The facilities adjacent to this marina may include cafes, restaurants and bars and hotel and retail”

Historic Creek

*Queenborough Town Council and many would not like the charm of the creek and the old town to be lost. The creek marina will help in protecting this charm, adding to the conservation area, with special features as indicated in the feasibility study by British Waterways. By providing berths for feature vessels, Thames Sailing Barges or Old Gaffers and impounding the water in the creek, this would **visually** add to the attraction of the area. The protection and use of the Klondike wharf and regeneration of Chalk wharf will encourage Thames sailing barges back to Queenborough.*

The Northside of the creek should be left as it is with most of the development taking place on the Southside of the creek to add to the old town’s charm, and adding a buffer to any housing development on the Southside.

Removal of Redundant Sluice barrier

One special feature could be to remove the old redundant sluice barrier/gate and open the whole length of the creek to bring vessel right into the heart and up to Rushenden road thereby increasing available berth spaces and to add to the vitality of at that end, and that the number of berths could be increased. The marina could become a focus for the whole area, including the island as a whole; adding value and amenity, bringing confidence and prosperity to the area. This would complement the activities of the Northside of the creek and harbour. It will give waterside activities a focus and become an attraction in its own right. Opportunities for play, eating and shopping could be available, and could attract business prospects.

Swale Waterfront

An added advantage of using a lock-gate with an impounded creek would be an interconnecting path and pedestrian/cyclist route across the top of the lock-gate as recognized in the masterplan connecting both Queenborough and Rushenden and beyond together. It could add to the charm like Heybridge Marina Basin, and Maldon in Essex.

Public Open Space Strategy

The public open space strategy is a key element of the masterplan and sets out a range of new opportunities opening up a Swale waterfront or a waterfront park like at Maldon in Essex and critically linking these to other open spaces with a comprehensive footpath and cycle network to Swale Park and Swale waterfront along the existing footpath past Chalk wharf and continuing across the lock-gate giving access to Queenborough and Queenborough park and harbour front.

Creating place and distinctiveness

Queenborough Creek is one of its most striking assets and still is a working creek. Water plays an important part in the character and history of Queenborough whether it is sailing and navigation or the control of flooding and drainage. Its location is traditionally favoured by visiting sailors and regeneration and

development opportunities will include a very positive response to the opportunities that this historic and present use provides, bringing in visitors and vessels right into the heart of the town.

The Sea Influences the Land

Impounding the sea would give the area distinctiveness and become a focal point adding character and charm and influencing the style and type of homes and business in the development without taking too much land away for housing, and businesses.

The images below capture some of the qualities of Queenborough today.

With the water impounded



With the water not impounded



DEMAND

Currently there is a two year waiting list, for berth alongside the Town Quay, in the creek, the BMF and another marine consultant commissioned by the QHT have indicated that the demand for berths nationally and locally here in the Medway and Swale has exceeded the numbers of berth available which has been limited due to planning restraints and available sites suitable for berthing boats.

Most of the marinas in the Medway are full; Gillingham Marina had its best year in 2013 being 100 percent full and its workshop, working flat out trying to keep up with the demand.

The demand at Queenborough is likely to be even greater given the right facilities, because of its location right on the doorstep to the estuary and not 10 mile up the river. Many suffer the extra 20 miles to go up stream and back because of the better facilities further up stream and investment helped by Medway Council.

The other important influencing factor for Queenborough is being on the confluence of three waterways and the Thames Estuary, being an international 'All Tide port' unlike the tidal restrictions on the other side of the Estuary.

This adds to the numbers of visitors Queenborough attracts, vessels waiting for a favourable tide for the Thames to London, or to shelter in a storm.

The situation and demand will grow even stronger as the population now have more time and money to purchase boats and the price of boats continues to fall.

Sheppey's Road Crossing and good rail transport adds to the likely demand for berths in this location (being one of the closest to London for berths)

Sustainability

With water impounded in the creek, the heat from which, could be extracted for homes and business by ground sourced heat pumps (which is the most efficient way for heat pumps to transfer heat, for every one watt of energy used you get more than 3 watt of heat out, (an efficient of more than 300 percent).

Wider Community Benefits

The location of this scheme is between the two settlements of Queenborough and Rushenden linked with the potential development of a district marina centre and commercial opportunities make this highly favourable. The benefits of linking the two communities, both physically and socially, to a new district centre focus cannot be underestimated, particularly if these included community opportunities at the end of the creek. The scheme could provide a single pontoon, providing the opportunities for dinghy sailing, canoeing and other leisure pursuits.

Culture and Tourism

Through research, it is anticipated that there would be some local movement of boat owners from existing moorings facilities/marinas nearby into a new facility such as this proposed option. However it is anticipated that the main influx would be from the Thames Estuary and Medway Towns. Also, there is likely to be a number of visitors from the continent, from France, Germany, and Holland, who are likely to stop at the marina, particularly if there were retail, community and leisure pursuits opportunities.

Industry and Commerce

This scheme option will benefit from the close location of the new Rushenden relief road and A249 connecting conveniently with the marina location; this will clearly bring industrial and commercial opportunities to the marina operation. Commercial operations for the marina are proposed in the form of a quay and use of the Klondyke and Chalk wharf which could accommodate historic vessels and could

integrate well with commercial boats for added interest. A lively and active basin of high quality would be able to command higher berthing rates.

Sport, Heath and Education

The option would allow free and easy movement for the communities of Queenborough and Rushenden by using extensive public open space, walkways as in the public open space strategy as above and green links to provide interesting routes to the community facilities and leisure pursuits. The potential for safe, well policed water related activities within a purpose made marina environment provides education to the heart of the new district centre.

Local government and development proposals

*Swale Borough Council resolved to adopt the Queenborough and Rushenden Masterplan. The Council adopted it on 12th November 2010. This now forms part of the Local Development Framework for Swale Borough Council. This masterplan forms the basis for the proposed Creek Marina, working with existing local government structures. Swale Borough Council already has in place a key priority of working with **private and public sector partners** to create the conditions for growth and to promote a positive image for the borough in **attracting inward Investment**.*

Peel Ports Marina Plans

The very long term plan in its very early stage for a possible marina at least 20 to 25 years, at Sheerness, should not have any effect on a plan for a Marina at Queenborough, and would complement both marinas if it ever went ahead, demand in the southeast will only grow in that time and the Peel Port Marina would cater for a different type of vessels, larger boats, longer than 60 ft. than currently moored in Queenborough.

*The plan for Sheerness Marina however is dependant on several difficult factors; one is the reclamation of land from the sea, and the other the close proximity to the SS Richard Montgomery only a mile away or so. And using SBC's criteria of viability assessments in support of its Local Plan shows the low viability on the Isle of Sheppey, and in particular the very **low value of houses and land value in Sheerness!** It is very likely that the Sheerness marina scheme will be left out of the final project.*

Attracting Inward Investment

*Attracting Inward Investment is the key, there is so much potential, at Queenborough this is once in a lifetime's opportunity to make something very special for Sheppey and Queenborough all based around using the water potential. **This must not be lost.***

References listed below from various other schemes show the potential of the area and confidence by others:-

The experts British Waterways

http://www2.swale.gov.uk/media/adobepdf/7%2Fe%2FAppendix_8_Reduced_Size_Pages_47-71.pdf

Option 3

Howard's Venice in Sheppy showing what potential and confidence is in the area

<http://www.blda.co.uk/Documents/VIS.PDF>

Conclusion

*There is a once in a Lifetimes chance to make Queenborough's regeneration something very special, This area was designated as a THAMES GATEWAY REGENERATION AREA to help and invest in projects and schemes that would **add viability and value** , create jobs and use the assets of Sheppey, especially at Rushenden and Queenborough .*

*Many creek areas in decline, situated in prime locations inside or near town centres, when they lose their **functional relevance** these areas often turn from vibrant focal points of economic activity into unattractive, often poorly integrated parts of town, with little economic dynamism, please don't let this happen to Queenborough, where this is a chance to **add value** and stimulate its economic activity.*

Islanders don't want just new housing without the infrastructure to give character and charm using its historical roots, opening up the possibilities of jobs and business, tourism and leisure, making Queenborough a nicer place to live for generations to come.

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