

Baltic Wharf Riverside Revival Planning Application Summary

surrounding road network.

This study found that there would only be minimal impact upon the surrounding road network. Three local junctions are already over capacity at peak periods and therefore will not work properly, with or without the Baltic Wharf development. A further four junctions will still be able to operate well within capacity with the scheme (i.e. traffic will flow freely). The study also concluded that New Walk, the road that leads to the site, has sufficient capacity to deal with the increase in traffic.

The applicants have agreed to Highway's request to fund forthcoming infrastructure improvements within the locality as well as improving the access to the site for pedestrians, cyclists and cars.

Although the experts do not see Baltic Wharf's potential traffic impact as significant, the site's owners believe that to be truly sustainable Baltic Wharf's design should help encourage alternative means of transport.

These include additional bus services and a range of measures to help cyclists and walkers. A management system will control parking, with priority spaces for car clubs/ sharing schemes.

Furthermore, the site's extensive live-work opportunities and the very low amount of traffic generated by the retirement village, help to further reduce the potential impact.

Sustainability

The applicants consider Baltic Wharf to be the most sustainable development site in Totnes and are committed to exploring its full potential.

The scheme's design incorporates the highest possible standards in terms of sustainability and low-carbon footprint. It includes:

- Code Level 3/BREAM Very Good as a minimum sustainability standard – higher levels will be achieved based on demand
- Minimum 10% energy will be renewable on-site - more if possible based on technical studies into a bio-mass boiler or similar
- Minimising the use of water by installing low water usage fixtures and fittings in homes and commercial buildings as well as rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling facilities
- Use of local materials maximised
- Waste Management Plan to minimise waste and maximise recycling
- Ecological value of the site improved through new planting and the creation of new habitats
- Climate change adaptations including flood risk levels in excess of Environment Agency level requirements
- Socially sustainable with potential co housing

project including exemplar Sustainability Visitors Centre.

Environmental Impact

The environmental impacts have been carefully assessed with a voluntary environmental impact assessment covering an extensive list of studies including ecology, flood risk, ground conditions, noise, landscape and visual impact, air quality, aborigiculture and transportation.

The studies indicate that virtually all environmental impacts of the development are positive in nature with significant enhancements to aspects such as landscape.

Local Support

The redevelopment is strongly supported by the community. This is evidenced by the Totnes Town Council/Community Strategy Group's support for a high density mixed development on the site and 88% support for the draft masterplan from those who responded to the public consultation held by the site owners last year.

The scheme has received the support of the Regional Design Panel who commented positively on the high density approach to the scheme. The level of quality, design and other commitments can be achieved by the owners who, as local families, are free from some of the corporate restrictions of a major developer.

Conclusion

Baltic Wharf could provide the first major step towards meeting Totnes' acute housing and employment needs. Despite the current economic conditions it is anticipated that the scheme could start as early as 2011/12.

The plans, well supported by planning policy, have been continually revised and improved over the last three years, in liaison with SHDC and other stakeholders. This process will continue to the reserved matters stage when planning permission will be sought for the detailed plans.

Few commercial schemes of this size can boast such potential for addressing the most pressing needs of the community so comprehensively or in such sustainable way. Still fewer have generated such whole-hearted approval from local people.

Without redevelopment, Baltic Wharf will decline over time and offer fewer and fewer employment opportunities. This redevelopment will ensure Baltic Wharf brings significant improvements to living, working and leisure opportunities in Totnes.

**Further details of the plans can be found at www.balticwharf.co.uk/revival
Please direct any specific queries to Steve Mittler, Managing Partner TQ9 Partnership, at revival@balticwharf.co.uk or 01803 867922.**

Baltic Wharf is a run-down and under-utilised 26 acre brown- and green-field riverside site close to the heart of Totnes.

South Hams District Council's emerging planning policies identify the site as suitable for redevelopment for employment and housing.

The outline planning application, summarised below, is being submitted this week. It responds to the Council's policies for the site. It is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform Baltic Wharf into a vibrant and sustainable new riverside quarter of Totnes, providing homes, jobs, homes and recreation space for local people.

Site Vision

Baltic Wharf is owned by three local families. Their vision for the site's revival is:

- Maintain and develop the site's marine activity
- Maximise employment potential
- Open the riverside and some 12 acres of green-field land for public amenity
- Provide a long-term living and care solution for retired people in a mixed community
- Provide genuinely affordable homes for local people including both homes for rent and part rent/part purchase
- Build sufficient market homes to ensure the scheme can be delivered
- Ensure the highest standards of design and sustainability.

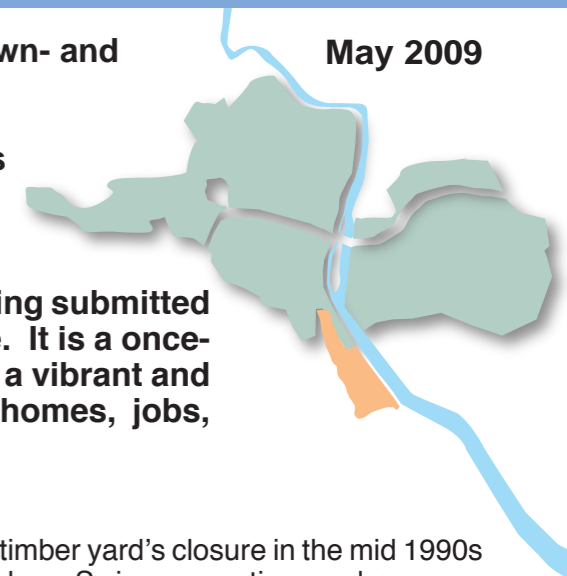
History

Baltic Wharf was run as a timber yard importing from the Baltic for most of the last century, employing a maximum of 200 people in its heyday.



Existing site photos

May 2009



Following the timber yard's closure in the mid 1990s it was bought by a Swiss consortium and run as a boatyard with other marine, light industrial, storage and other businesses as it is today.

It has long been recognised that the site does not fulfil its potential. A planning application for a purely commercial development incorporating 15000m² of offices and workshops and a 5000m² boatyard was approved in 1996 and renewed in 2000. However, without housing to underpin the scheme, the proposals were not financially viable and so were never implemented.

In 2006 the 13-acre former timber yard and 13 acres of adjacent fields were purchased by the current owners. Today Baltic Wharf has a built footprint of 11000m² and employs around 100 people.

Planning Context

The development proposals being submitted accord extremely well with national, regional and local planning policies.



The brown-field site is currently designated as an employment zone in the local adopted plan (1996). The Totnes and Dartington DPD passed through Preferred Options stage in 2007 and identified Baltic Wharf for redevelopment including significant employment provision, retention of boatyard (min 5000m²), public open space and improved access. The DPD recognises that any viable development proposal will need to include housing.

Employment

The application's employment plans will:

- Protect and enhance the long-term future of the marine industry
- Maximise site employment by quadrupling the number of jobs on site
- Retain existing employers within the locality.

There will be new enhanced marine facilities for existing and additional marine workers alongside a boatyard of equivalent capacity (and over double the minimum local plan requirement) when completed. There will be facilities for small boats for the first time as well as new pontoons, thus increasing access to the site from both the town and river.

Most jobs will be primarily office based alongside marine, health care and retail opportunities providing a total of over 400 jobs. Existing jobs will be maintained where required throughout the development period through phasing and decant arrangements.

Creating new employment space at Baltic Wharf is loss making and therefore cannot proceed without

financial assistance from the market housing.

Public Amenity Space

The new public areas will include:

- A riverside walk offering an all too rare opportunity to enjoy the river within the town
- A public plaza containing a restaurant/café and several shops
- New "green fingers" of land enabling public access between the built environment and the fields behind.

Some 12 acres of landscape behind will be opened up for public use. These will be significantly enhanced with new and improved access and pathways, indigenous planting, new meadow, orchard and wetland areas and new opportunities for wildlife as well as play areas for young and older children.

Retirement Village

A retirement village offers an increasingly popular approach to elderly living, enabling retired people to live independently at home for as long as possible, with the back-up of the on-site registered Nursing Home. This will help to alleviate the "demographic timebomb" in a location which offers integration both within a vibrant Baltic Wharf and with the nearby town centre.

The village has been shown to have an overall positive health impact on the community and is supported in principle by Devon Primary Care Trust. The Retirement Village also offers job

opportunities to a wide range of healthcare and support staff, generates very low levels of traffic and will include some leisure facilities for local people.

Housing

The housing will offer family accommodation with mainly 2-3 bedroom flats and houses. The homes will be tenure blind (i.e. the affordable and market housing will be designed to the same standards) and offer attractive views of the river or south facing fields behind. A maximum of 160 market homes are required to ensure viability and therefore enable this scheme to go ahead.

Affordable Homes

Despite the worst economic conditions for at least 60 years, the owners have managed to maintain their offer of up to 90 affordable homes subject to market conditions and the total number of homes built.

Baltic Wharf's relatively high existing use value as a commercial site and brown-field nature (which makes it much more expensive to develop than a green-field site) means that any higher percentage of affordable homes would make the scheme financially unviable. These figures are based on an independent review of the applicant's financial appraisal of the site conducted for SHDC and a jointly commissioned formal Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) valuation (red book), which reported in April 2009 on behalf of both SHDC and the site owners.

The Government has set a target of 35% affordable homes in new developments across the South

West region in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy. The owners of Baltic Wharf believe that exceeding this level of provision is an exceptional offer for the site in the current economic circumstances and underlines their strong commitment to providing as many affordable homes as are deliverable in addition to the jobs, public open space and other benefits of the scheme.

Live Work Facilities

A range of facilities are planned to encourage a high proportion of residents to live and work on the site. These include:

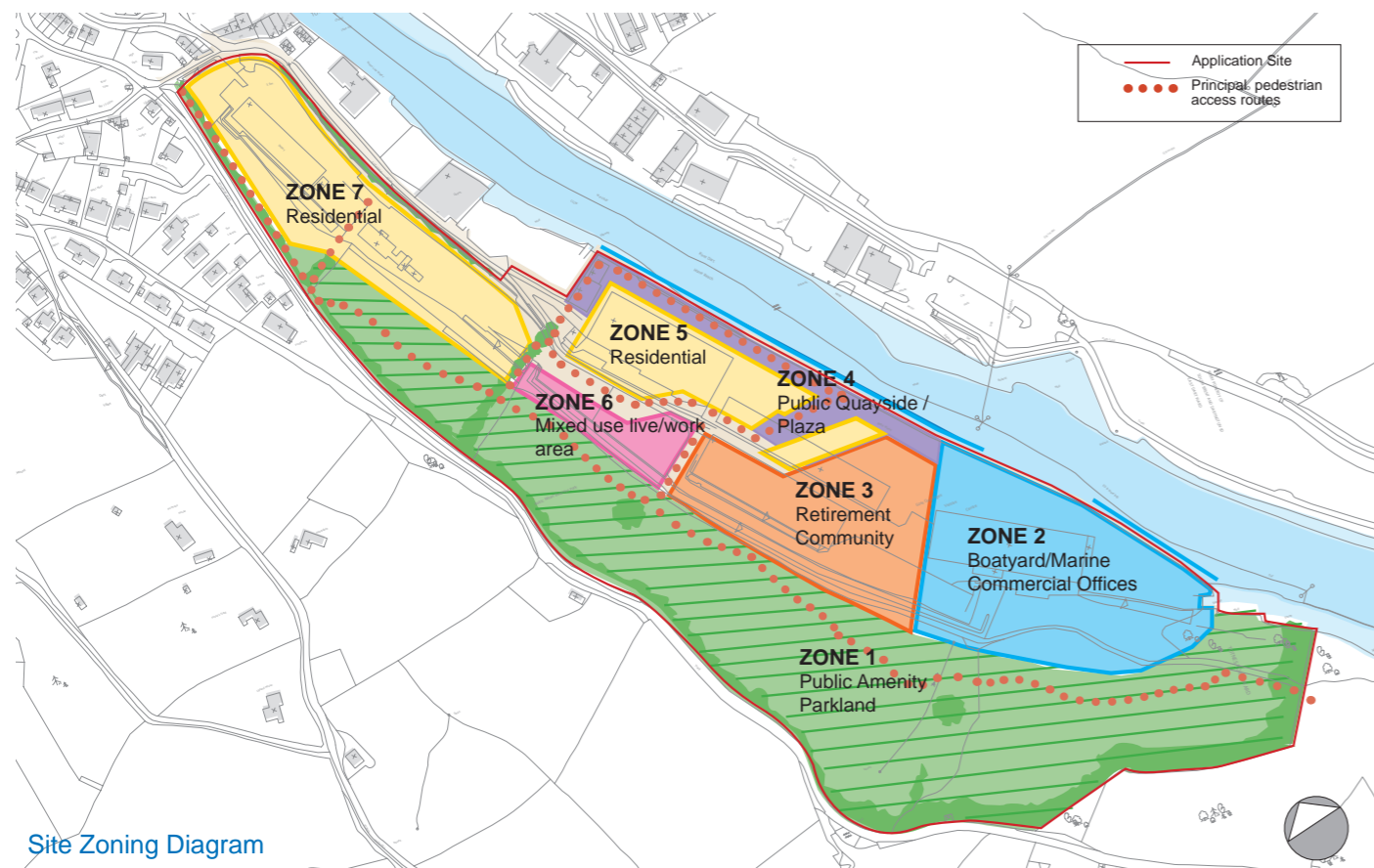
- Managed office facilities including meeting rooms and work stations available for short term rent
- 20-25 homes which include an office or studio designed for home working
- Natural opportunities available to site residents to work within the employment facilities, including the Retirement Village, on the site.

Co Housing

A potential co housing project could be one of the first of its type in the UK offering mixed tenure sustainable and communal living. It is expected to further enhance the development, social inclusion and quality of life within Baltic Wharf and includes both market and affordable homes.

Traffic and Transport

The local highway authority, Devon County Council, has now endorsed the findings of an independent survey into Baltic Wharf's potential impact on the



Site Zoning Diagram



Figure 4 Illustrative Masterplan