

Hythe Marine Park



Hythe Marine Park public exhibition

Thursday, 29th November 2007
1pm to 8pm

SEEDA is holding an exhibition at The Grove in Hythe, to outline plans for the site. See back cover for full details.

Hythe sails into the future

It's just over a year since the former US Army base at RAF Hythe closed in September 2006 with the loss of some 200 jobs. Since then, the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has been working behind the scenes with local partners in order to ensure the successful future of the site.

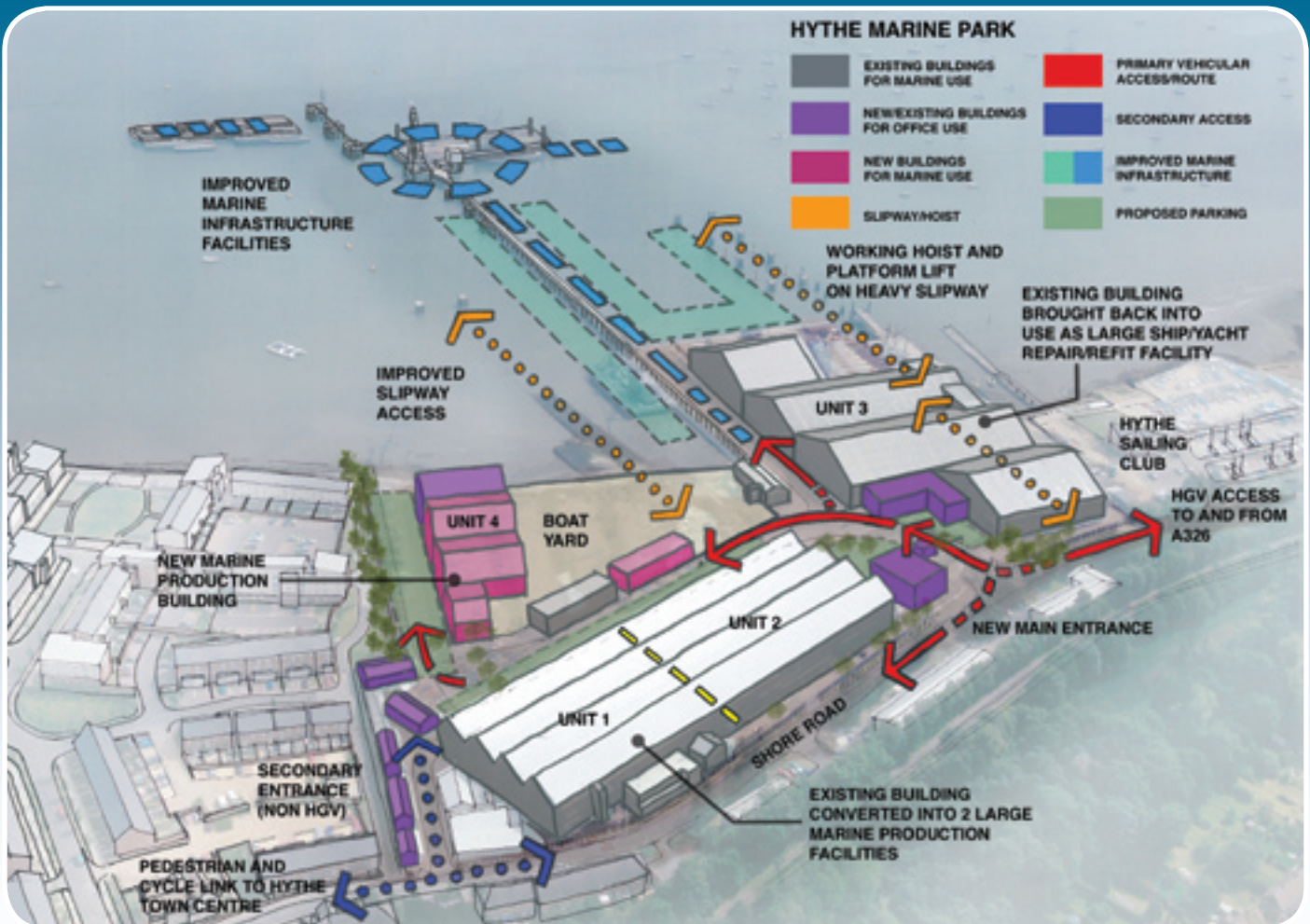
In early October 2007, SEEDA completed the purchase of the site from the Ministry of Defence. As one of the last available waterside employment locations in The Solent area, Hythe is an important site for the marine industry, and SEEDA's primary aim is to ensure its long-term use for marine employment.

The marine park provides some 22,000 m² of property set in approximately 4.9 hectares (12 acres) of land. While it was a US Army base, it was used for the servicing and repair of US military vessels and vehicles with a workforce skilled in services such as electronics, shot blasting, marine engineering, fabrication, welding, pipefitting and rigging. The site is dominated by two large hangars, both with waterfront access, with one benefitting from a unique ship lifting facility which is able to lift up to 950 tonnes. There are also workshops, paint shops and office accommodation as well as working berths, a pier, pontoons and barge platforms.

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The vision

SEEDA is going to re-open the site at Hythe as a marine business park and ensure it has a long-term, sustainable future. The Agency intends to bring the facilities of the site back into use for the benefit of the marine industry and will work to transform it from a single-use military facility to a business park for many marine companies.

The site will be adapted, with a new main entrance on Shore Road. New units will be created (subject to planning permission) and the main hangars will be subdivided. The services and utilities on the site will also be upgraded.



More than 200 skilled staff were formerly employed on site and the aim is to bring at least that number of jobs back to the marine park. SEEDA is encouraging marine companies which can make maximum use of the specialist provisions on the site, such as the water access and berths, to move to the marine park. Such marine companies will bring skilled employment and training opportunities to the area, both for ex-employees of the former RAF Hythe and for new entrants to the industry.

What is SEEDA?

SEEDA is one of nine Government funded Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) which have been established throughout England since 1999. SEEDA is responsible for the economic and social development of the South East of England, an area which is the driving force of the UK's economy.



Unique ship lifting facility

There is a 10,000 m² hangar on the site which includes a platform lift and heavy slipway. The 950 tonne hoist can move vessels of around 50 metres up the railed slipway and on to the hardstanding. There is also an internal rail system which operates throughout the hangar and allows for dry docking of multiple vessels, protected from the elements.

This hoist is a unique piece of equipment and is likely to be attractive to a variety of ship and yacht repairers. SEEDA is working with Marine South East to bring this facility back into use for the benefit of the wider marine industry. SEEDA intends the slip, associated moorings and workspace, to be made available to hire on a commercial basis, and has commissioned an intensive maintenance programme which, it is expected, will enable the slip to be ready for use in spring 2008.



Who's involved

SEEDA is working closely with the New Forest District Council (NFDC), Hampshire County Council, Hythe & Dibden Parish Council, Hythe Air Training Corp (ATC), Defence Estates and Marine South East to create a high quality, marine related employment site.

Marine South East is the regional maritime initiative developed to address the needs of the marine sector in the South East region. Its role is to identify projects of strategic importance to the sector's growth and to work with sector teams and partnerships to support increased economic development of the marine sector in the South East. To find out more about Marine South East, please visit their website: www.marinesoutheast.co.uk

SEEDA is working with the ATC's Hythe Squadron and Defence Estates to relocate the current ATC facility from the Hythe site. The current ATC accommodation is dated and located in the only position available for the new access road. SEEDA will therefore be working closely with the ATC, Defence Estates and NFDC to identify a new site elsewhere in the Parish.





What's next?

The first step in adapting the site will be to open a safe vehicular access. This will involve the submission of a planning application to New Forest District Council during autumn 2007.

Work is just beginning to adapt the marine park from an ex-military facility to a fully occupied business park suitable for helping businesses compete on a world stage. Provided the finer details of the transformation of the site have been established, and planning permission has been awarded for the new road access, it is hoped that businesses will begin to re-occupy the marine park as early as the beginning of 2008.

SEEDA is holding an exhibition in Hythe to keep the local community informed on the progress made in bringing the site back into use. This will be your opportunity to discuss the plans for the site, therefore we encourage you to come along and give us your views.

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Hythe and Dibden Parish Council,
The Grove, 25 St John's Street,
Hythe, Hampshire. SO45 6BZ

We will also be regularly updating information on the site via our website: www.seeda.co.uk.

Marine businesses interested in locating to Hythe Marine Park should contact Paul Flatt direct (see below).

For further information about the Hythe Marine Park or other work undertaken by SEEDA, please visit our website: www.seeda.co.uk (search under 'developments hythe').

Or contact:

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If English is not your first language we can provide a summarised version of this document in Punjabi, Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, Polish and Bengali. The document can also be made available in large print, Braille, disk and audio cassette.

For a copy, please contact Maxine Maclaren, Marketing & Events Manager by any of the following methods:



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