



INVENTOR OF PEOPLE



Ifracombe Harbour Board
Development Strategy 2012 - 2026

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Ilfracombe Harbour Board

Development Strategy 2012 – 2026

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 North Devon District Council (NDC) and the Ilfracombe Harbour Board (IHB) recognise the development and regeneration potential of Ilfracombe Harbour and this document, which will update the IHB Strategic Development Plan (2009), will scope and prioritise the options available.
- 1.1.2 IHB are committed to ensuring the long term financial viability of the Harbour by supporting sustainable growth which will benefit the Town and the wider North Devon economy.
- 1.1.3 Within this document IHB considers viable and deliverable development proposals. It ensures that the aspirations of stakeholders, including Ilfracombe Town Council, are taken into account and that there is a commonality of effort between decision makers.

1.2 Report Structure

- 1.2.1 This report is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 Introduction Recognises the need for strategic review, determines the key principles of the review and identifies the Strategic aims and objectives.

Chapter 2 Understanding the Harbour Provides an overview of the Harbour in 2012. It identifies the environmental and heritage assets and examines how they affect future development aspirations.

Chapter 3 The Planning Policy Context It is important to understand how Ilfracombe Harbour fits within other planning policy

documents and this chapter looks at all levels of Planning Policy that have or may have an effect on future harbour development.

Chapter 4 Options for Development and Appraisal This chapter summarises the options for development and explains how and why the final development strategy has been reached.

Chapter 5 The Development Strategy 2012 – 2026 Explains the final Development Strategy and sets out the details of the individual projects.

Chapter 6 Economic Impacts Assessment This chapter explains the predicted economic impacts of the development options previously studied and how best to build resilience and sustainability into development proposals.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and Next Steps This chapter sets out the key spatial, transport and access issues which will affect the Development Strategy. It summarises the funding, delivery and business investment approach required and looks at potential Public Funding Opportunities.

1.3 Why is this review necessary

- 1.3.1 IHB and NDC are jointly committed to testing and developing proposals for the development of the harbour which will safeguard its structure and economic viability and allow it to continue as a focal point for tourism and leisure activities in Ilfracombe and surrounding areas. There are a wide range of organisations and groups who have representation and influence in the decision making for the running of Ilfracombe Harbour. The review of IHB's Development Strategy allows these stakeholders to be involved in the production of a shared vision for the future.
- 1.3.2 IHB's Strategic Development Plan produced in 2009 relied on studies and information provided prior to the Board's formation and thus the proposals put forward were heavily geared toward achieving a safe working environment and improving the tourist offer. Since 2009

there have been attempts to set up a ferry service to South Wales, changes to the fishing industry and increases in the range of maritime based leisure activities. In addition to these changes, during the last two years, there have been tentative approaches from organisations involved in renewable energy, in cruise liner operations and in the development of the vacant land areas within the harbour's administrative boundaries. Increasingly, organisations have come to realise that there can be no profit in working in isolation so that one of the aims of this study is to obtain early consultation and harmony between groups that have the same ultimate objectives but could direct their efforts along narrow and uncooperative lines.

1.3.3 The 2012 Development Strategy for Ilfracombe Harbour will identify projects for the immediate short term, the next five years, and for the longer term to 2026.

1.3.4 It is the intention of the IHB that this Development Strategy will be kept under constant review and will be updated and re-published as necessary to take account of changing circumstances and conditions.

1.4 Planning Principles

1.4.1 The brief determined for the Development Strategy has the following key aims:

- Prepare ambitious, viable and deliverable proposals for the development of the harbour to support related initiatives to secure its role in the local and regional economy. The proposals will reflect the joint aspirations of IHB, NDC and Ilfracombe Town Council and will include strategic plans for the medium to long term with sufficient detail for local planning authorities and eventual guidance of appointed professional planning consultants.
- Ensure that development proposals are in line with local, regional and national planning policy objectives.
- Identify the key developments which will offer the potential to kick-start investment and regeneration.

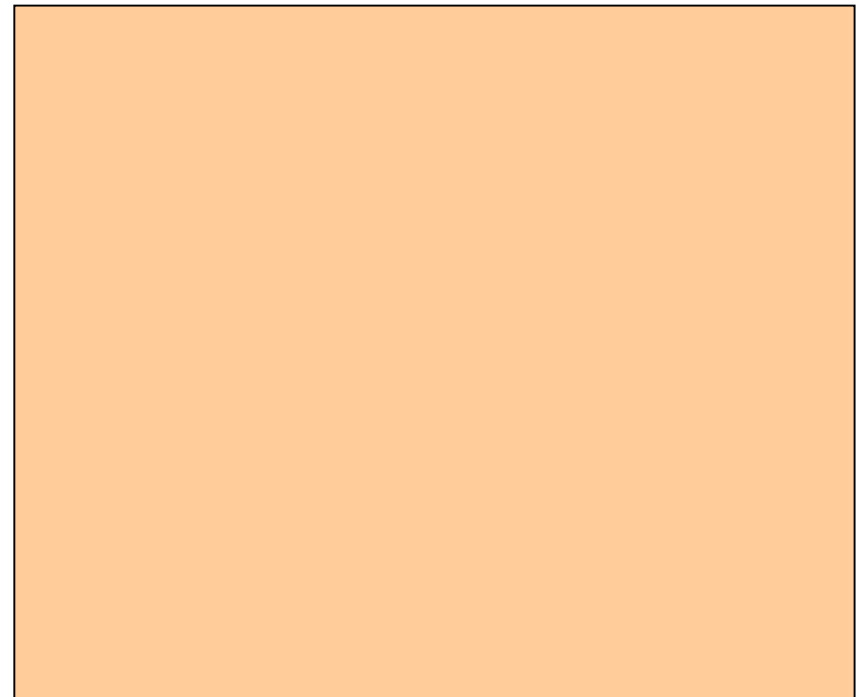
1.5 Strategic Aim and Objectives

1.5.1 The Strategic Aim and Objectives have been developed and agreed with Key Stakeholders.

Strategic Aim



Strategic Objectives



Chapter 2: Understanding the Harbour

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This Chapter provides an understanding of the Harbour in 2012. It outlines the Harbour management process, looks at current operations and considers the key spatial strengths and weaknesses.

2.2 Management

2.2.1 North Devon Council (NDC) are the owners of Ilfracombe Harbour and as such are the legal guardians and designated Harbour Authority. The Statutory Boundary¹ of the Harbour Authority area, and additional designated land areas which make up the Administrative Boundary, is shown at Figure 4 on page 9.

2.3 Current Harbour Operations

2.3.1 The main harbour business operations are centred around the management of the inner and outer harbours with commercial fishing activities, moorings for visiting and local leisure boats, excursion, fishing and dive charter boats, coastal ferries (the Oldenburg, Waverley and Balmoral), Cruise ship visits landing international travellers for visits to the town and local tourist attractions and the RNLI. Tourism is the dominant sector in the Town and accounts for 1 in 3 jobs and more than 40% of the businesses. These figures are greater at the Harbour where the majority of dependence is tourism centric.

2.3.2 The estimated economic impacts of the current harbour activities are included in Table 1 below. The 'wider tourism impacts' clearly stand out because the harbour is a key attraction to the many visitors that come to the town and spend money on accommodation, food and drink and other goods and services.

	Employment (FTE Jobs)	GVA (£)
Harbour Authority	3.5	34,000
Commercial Fishing	28.5	1,013,000
Ferry activities	15.6	353,000
Leisure Boating	4.1	127,000
Excursion/Charter Boats	23.8	619,000
RNLI activities	1.5	53,000
Wider tourism impact	200	5,989,000
Total Harbour Impact	277	8,187,000

Table 1²

2.4 Harbour Geography

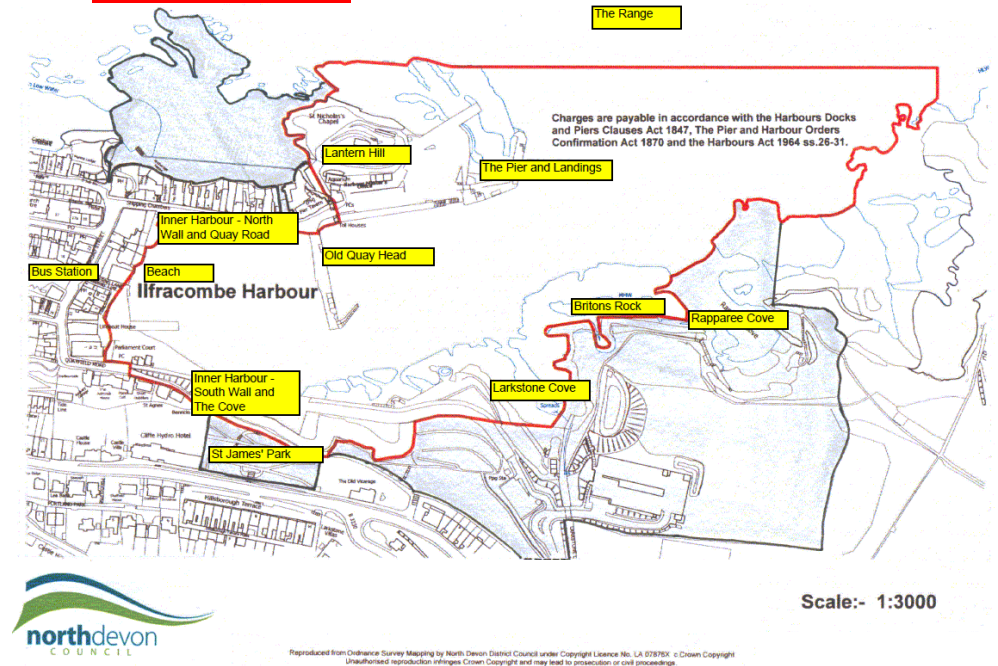


Figure 1 – Harbour map showing byelaw boundary(in red)

¹ Section 6 of the Pier and Harbour Orders Confirmation (No.1) Act 1900

² GHK Economic impact Assessment 2010

- 2.4.1 The Range is the anchorage in the open Bristol Channel, to the North of the harbour. It is used for large visiting vessels and cruise liners, which are unable to enter the harbour but are able to transfer passengers to the landing stage by tender.
- 2.4.2 The Pier and Landings were rebuilt as part of the, 'Restoring the Heritage' project.³ They are used as tidal landing stages for visiting ships including the Lundy Island vessel "Oldenburg". It is also used by anglers and forms part of the tourist area, particularly at low tide. Lantern Hill, which houses the Grade I listed St. Nicholas's Chapel at its summit, stands on and overlooks the Pier from the North. This Nationally important structure is a significant heritage asset to the Harbour.
- 2.4.3 Old Quay Head is a Grade II* listed structure⁴ which extends into the harbour and forms the boundary between the Outer and Inner harbours. It is used as a landing point for small boats and as a temporary storage area for local commercial fishermen. As a requirement of grant funding from English Heritage the Quay remains open to public access but there is little to define it as a tourist attraction. The Quay structure is unstable and the relentless effects of tidal and wave action are having a significant detrimental affect on its material fabric.
- 2.4.4 The Inner Harbour North Wall fronts on to Quay Road and the commercial and retail properties along its length. The quay and the area are also Grade II listed. The wall has access ladders which are used by small boat owners and extensively by tourists and visitors to the harbour. All permanent resident boat moorings are situated in the Inner Harbour, as are many of the seasonal visitors moorings. The lack of winter protection requires that the majority of resident boats are lifted out onto adjacent Car Parks from November to March.
- 2.4.5 The Beach in the Inner harbour represents a small but valuable social asset. Being sheltered and open to the sun it is used by locals and

visitors extensively in the Summer months. In the South Western corner of the beach is the RNLI slipway which is kept clear for launching and recovery operations and for harbour access.



Figure 2 - Ilfracombe Harbour from the air

³ NDC led project in 2000 supported by DEFRA, SWRDA, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

⁴ The pier has a medieval foundation and was enlarged and extended in 1760

2.4.6 The Inner Harbour South Wall and the Cove represent the commercial heart of the harbour as this area contains the re-fuelling berth and alongside berths for the resident fishing fleet. The area also houses a Car Park and is used by the many tourists and other members of the public, whilst following the South West Coast Path and generally transiting the Harbour area. In the interests of safety the leisure and working areas are segregated as much as possible given the restricted space available.

2.4.7 Further to the East lie Larkstone and Rapparee Coves which have significant history⁵ but are currently underused and available for development and regeneration projects. Rapparee does provide for good bathing but can be exposed in certain weather conditions.

2.5 Environmental Conditions

2.5.1 The Bristol Channel is recognised for its large range of tides, which results in strong tidal flows. Being open to the Atlantic the Channel is subject to frequent strong winds, oceanic swell and waves, all of which focus the need for a well protected harbour, which is accessible at all times.

2.5.2 The Harbour is very exposed to weather and sea patterns from North to North East and thus many boat owners are unable to insure their boats through the winter months. This requires the majority to lift their boats out of the harbour, between November and March, for safe keeping. In particularly poor conditions the fishing fleet move their vessels to other ports for safety.

2.6 Geography and Geology

2.6.1 Geographical co-ordinates for the harbour are: Latitude 51° 12.6'N Long. 004° 06.7'W. The harbour itself is in a sandy basin protected from the open sea to the North by the rocky outcrop of Lantern Hill and overlooked to the East by the towering promontory of

Hillsborough, which drops down to the rugged coves of Rapparee⁶ and Larkstone. The land to the South of the harbour rises steeply to join the main (A399) through road and the commercial and residential areas of the town. Northern Devon's unspoilt coastline is a popular tourist attraction and this nationally important landscape is designated as both an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coast⁷. Much of the coastline is also designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)⁸ and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).



Figure 3 - Ilfracombe Harbour at Low Tide

⁶ Rapparee Cove is an important geological site, exposed faults and slips

⁷ Heritage Coast objectives are set out in PPG20: Coastal Planning

⁸ Ilfracombe Conservation Area, Character Appraisal 2009

⁵ In the 18th Century Rapparee Cove was home to a shipyard and dock

2.7 Harbour Finances

2.7.1 Ilfracombe Harbour, as a Municipal Harbour, relies heavily on Local Authority support to maintain it for the benefit of local stakeholders, visitors and the wider community. Income and expenditure will be managed through an Assured Trading Account to assist the Board in making budgetary decisions and to allow focussed auditing of the Harbour undertaking.

2.7.2 Under the terms of the establishing Act⁹ income derived from harbour operations should be ring-fenced in identifiable accounts. However, it is clear to see from the latest audited accounts that the amount of income currently generated does not cover necessary outlays. This means that the harbour will continue to rely heavily on Council financial support into the future.

2.7.3 The Income and Expenditure figures for the Harbour and its Car Parks for 2010/11 are:

Sales of Fuel to vessels	£296,260
Rent	£ 21,522
Fees and charges on small craft	£ 47,461
Visiting vessels	£ 13,860
Miscellaneous	£ 5,808
Car parking	<u>£239,661</u>
Total annual income	£624,572
Total annual expenditure ¹⁰	<u>£707,143</u>
Net Loss	<u>£ 82,571</u>

2.7.4 An 'Assured Harbour Trading Account' will:

- Ensure that an accurate account of income and expenditure is maintained for the whole of the Harbour undertaking.
- Aid the provision of a reserve account.

- Properly recognise all income from the designated Harbour Area.

2.7.5 The IHB will work with NDC to build adequate reserves in a contingency fund for anticipated capital projects and replacement programmes within the Harbour into the future. The information compiled in 2.7.4 above will be a key consideration in this process.

⁹ Piers and Harbours Act 1990

¹⁰ Total includes depreciation and internal service charges

Chapter 3 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Introduction

3.1.2 This Chapter introduces the planning issues that have, or may in the future have, an effect on Harbour regeneration and development. There is some uncertainty caused by the fact that National and Local Planning policy is in a period of significant reform. It is changing from a top-down approach to applying increased importance on Local Authorities, through the Localism Act 2011. A new Local Development Framework and North Devon and Torridge Joint Core Strategy will eventually replace the Planning Policy currently extant in the Regional Spatial Strategy and the North Devon Local Plan.

3.2 Planning Context

3.2.1 Planning for the development of Ports and Harbours is complicated by the fact that Harbours are established through individual Acts of Parliament, which set out the statutory limits of the Harbour and also define and restrict the range of developments that are permitted. Any variation to these terms have to be the subject of Harbour Revision Orders (HRO's) which have a process entirely separate from planning in general.

3.2.2 For Ilfracombe Harbour the relevant Act is "Piers and Harbour Orders Confirmation (No 1) Act 1900, which provides specifically for "permitted" and "excluded" developments, which essentially preserve the harbour and its associated areas as a working entity. For any other developments within the Harbour boundary the national, regional and local planning rules apply.

3.2.3 One of the key objectives within the planning regime is to facilitate development through collaborative working with adjoining authorities and stakeholders to provide viable infrastructure for sustainable economic growth, transport investment, including strategies for the development of ports. It may be that the future of North Devon's marine related business can best be served by partnership working with adjacent authorities.

3.2.4 In the North Devon area, and in Ilfracombe in particular, planning is also affected by the existence of the Coast Protection Act 1949, Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Marine Conservation Zones, Heritage Coast status, Listed Buildings and Biosphere Reserves. These factors are important when working towards the overarching need to provide more housing and employment, improving transport links by all modes, and the vital need to encourage increased footfall and spend through improved tourism facilities.

3.2.5 A constant theme in all the National, Regional and Local plans, important extracts of which are contained in Annex C, is the development of Ports and Harbours as part of a sustainable transport and employment focus. Ilfracombe Harbour is the only harbour open to the Bristol Channel on the North Devon coastline and has tremendous opportunities opening up for it due to potential offshore energy projects, trans-channel and trans-coastal ferry and freight services, a calling port for cruise liners and a constantly increasing demand from marine leisure activities. Plus of course the ever present volume of tourists.

3.2.6 Ilfracombe Harbour has its problems, it is exposed to swell and wind waves from certain directions, the harbour dries out at low tide which restricts access, some of the built environment is weak and subject to occasional flooding and damage, access for transport is restricted and during the summer months congestion is endemic.

3.2.7 This Development Strategy has been developed to respond to these weaknesses through carefully planned development projects which have been derived from study of the harbour, perusal of previous consultancy reports and extensive collaborative work with Ilfracombe Town Council, North Devon Council, as the owners and the Harbour Authority, and with all other stakeholder groups.

Chapter 4: Options for Development and Appraisal

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This Chapter sets out a range of options for development, which have been considered for each of the 4 identified areas of the harbour (Fig. 4). These areas have been selected for their distinct geographical and environmental characteristics and variety of development potential. Their boundaries are not fixed and when considering options they will inevitably overlap with adjacent areas. Each will be considered separately, but always with the understanding that any individual development must eventually contribute to the whole. Through this logical sequence the Board has carried out a robust assessment of the alternatives and arrived at a definitive Development Strategy.

4.1.2 There have been many development and regeneration proposals for Ilfracombe Harbour and these are the subject of reports and studies undertaken by Independent Consultants (Annex A). All previous reports have been consulted in preparing the final preferred Development Strategy, which has been widely consulted upon with the key Stakeholders. Agreement between all parties allows the strategy to form the basis of a co-ordinated development vision. The intention of the Strategy is that all development has to be achievable, sustainable and economically viable and provide the optimum result for operational safety and the well being of stakeholders and visitors.

4.1.3 An overall summary of the development areas will include:

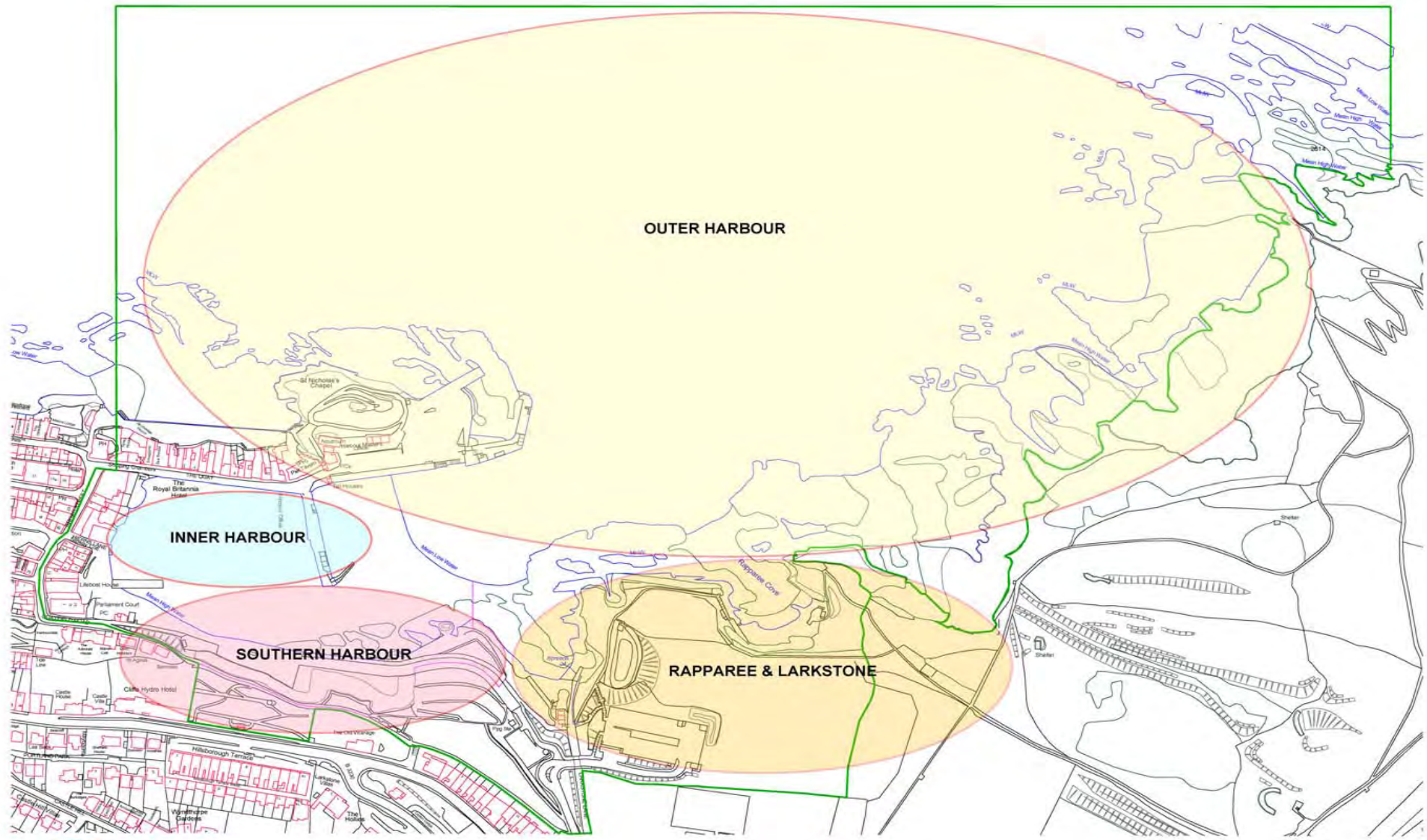
- A development appraisal giving the options for discussion.
- An assessment of viable projects that contribute to the Strategic Aim and Strategic Objectives of the IHB.
- A Summary of Options appraisal which considers:
 - Economic Impact
 - Sustainability
 - Urban design
 - Consultation with key stakeholders

4.2 'Do Nothing' assumptions

4.2.1 The baseline assessment from which development potential has been measured is that of, 'Do Nothing'. That is that there will be no appreciable development within the Harbour Authority area and that the Harbour remains as it is in 2012. The implications of, 'Do Nothing' are summarised as follows:

- Changes to Commercial Fishing techniques and regulation could reduce the ability of the harbour to provide a base for operations.
- Maritime transport services could choose other ports for their operations.
- The number of leisure craft using the Harbour remains static.
- Tourist footfall increases due to economic influences and conflict between vehicles and pedestrians increases.
- Marine sports activities demand more space and facilities.
- The harbour is not used as an operations and maintenance base for offshore energy projects.
- Cruise operators consider that the use of tenders in open sea conditions is too dangerous and stop calling.
- Old Quay Head deteriorates further and has to be closed to the public and as a Working Quay.
- Climate change results in seasonal flooding of quays and harbour business and residential properties.
- Housing and commercial developments will use up valuable land adjacent to the Harbour further reducing options for marine development.
- Unrelated development of the Bus Station site may restrict vehicular access further.

Figure 4 – Development Areas



Ilfracombe Harbour

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Scale :- 1:4000 at A4

Date: 12th Dec. 2011

4.3 Development Areas

The 4 development areas are:

4.3.1 **‘Outer Harbour’ and approaches including Britons Rock**

Development in this area focuses primarily on a protecting Northern breakwater. The North Devon Local Plan (2006) gave specific support for the breakwater saying that future development stages could involve, “The creation of an outer breakwater to provide a tourist attraction and deep water berthing for passenger ferry crossing to encourage links to other locations including Wales”. Many configurations for this breakwater have been put forward over the years but each one has largely ignored the operational opportunities, which must be the primary focus in any future design planning. Any breakwater configuration must provide for ease of navigation and could result in a standalone structure extending from the current Pier, an island breakwater, a stub breakwater extending from Hillsborough or a combination of them. Britons Rock and any areas inside a protecting breakwater could be developed for new berthing and mooring facilities and could also provide the southern side position of a lock/sill for a marina development.

A Southern Quay development could also be situated in this area to provide a protected, restricted access quay for renewable energy operations and maintenance

4.3.2 **‘Rapparee and Larkstone’ Coves, their hinterland and approaches**

These two Coves are under utilised at present and both offer distinct development potential. Rapparee Cove is surrounded by steep cliffs and thus offers no more than the provision of a community leisure facility, with scope for some commercial enterprise. Larkstone has better access and more real estate to offer. It could be developed to provide a hub for leisure activity and/or provide a base for business development proposals. The Land adjoining both of the Coves and overlooking the Harbour could provide a valuable site for mixed commercial developments.

4.3.3 **‘Southern Harbour’ and St James’ Park**

This site offers the potential for both the development of the Commercial Fishing facilities and urban design led residential and commercial growth as well as improved access for tourists.

4.3.4 **‘Inner Harbour’ and Old Quay Head**

This site has remained unchanged for many years and is very much part of the unique charm of Ilfracombe. The main focus of any development in this area will be the protection of Old Quay Head including perhaps its inclusion in any future marina development.

A widening of Quay Road and the installation of traffic lights could provide improved access and reduce congestion for local businesses and visitors.

4.4 Options Appraisal

In each of the identified development areas a number of ideas are listed which highlight the significant potential which could accrue to the local economy from a coordinated and sensitive approach. In pinpointing the key elements the IHB is conscious of the need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment surrounding the harbour. However, it also realises that at the same time it needs to develop the harbour as a viable economic and social focus for residents and visitors. Potential developments include:

4.4.1 **The Outer Harbour and approaches including Britons Rock**

- A protecting Outer Breakwater
- A Southern Quay offering protection for Wind Farm vessels
- Reclamation of land to provide Ops/Maintenance Base on Pier for renewable energy companies
- Lock/Sill Gate to provide access to a marina
- Ro-Ro berth for cross channel Ferry

- Development/Maintenance of Lantern Hill as a tourist attraction
- New Commercial quay on Britons Rock
- A commercially operated visitor attraction on Pier
- Walking 'Fish Trail'
- Additional facilities for visiting and local sea anglers

4.4.2 **Rapparee and Larkstone Coves, their hinterland and approaches**

- Ops/Maintenance base for renewable energy companies in Larkstone Cove
- Hotel development on NDC land between Larkstone and Rapparee
- New slipway access to Larkstone Cove
- Provision of multi use Watersports centre in Larkstone Cove
- Commercial Café/Restaurant development in Larkstone Cove
- Improved access for residents, visitors and walkers
- Rebrand and revitalise Rapparee Cove as a tourist attraction
- Improve Larkstone Lane access

4.4.3 **The Southern Harbour and St James' Park**

- New fisherman's stores and completion of FLAG project
- Widening of the quays on the Cove to provide reclaimed land.
- Extension of working quay to seawards with segregated working areas
- Designated pedestrian walkways
- Walking 'Fish Trail'
- Commercial land development use of St James' Park and Marine Drive
- Closing of roadway to through traffic
- Provision for more dinghy storage
- Improved electricity and water supply to quay
- Provide footbridge from the Cove to Old Quay head for improved pedestrian circulation

4.4.4 **The Inner Harbour and Old Quay Head**

- Provide long term protection to Old Quay Head
- Reduce traffic and pedestrian conflict on Quay Road
- Extend width of Quay Road and/or widen pavement and install traffic control system
- Provide mooring pontoons on North Wall
- Move Commercial fishing operations from Old Quay Head
- Widen Old Quay Head and improve visitor attraction offer
- Improve pedestrian and visitor access to old Quay Head
- Provide mooring pontoons on the Eastern Face of Old Quay Head
- Refurbish stores for Angling/Diving Charter use
- Dredge inner harbour to provide deeper water moorings
- Provide raised pedestrian walkway at top of beach



Figure 5 - Aerial picture of Ilfracombe Harbour from the North

4.5 Summary of Options Appraisal

4.5.1 The Options appraisal in 4.4 above highlights many potential projects and some compete with each other in terms of land and resource requirements. This summary places those conflicts in context and discusses some of the economic and urban design issues to be faced. Not all ideas have been brought forward from the appraisal, as some would be particularly difficult or unsuitable to deliver within the life of this plan.

The Outer Harbour and approaches including Britons Rock

4.5.2 It is well understood that the Harbour Authority would be unable to deliver an outer breakwater scheme within its own resources. However, there is a huge appetite for it locally and it is considered that a scheme could be viable and deliverable with grant money and public/private partnership working. An outer breakwater would be a catalyst to further regeneration and the majority of options for this zone could be realised. Benefits that would stem from the building of a breakwater would include:

- Permanently afloat Lifeboats (reducing response times)
- Deep water, afloat, moorings for larger visiting vessels (Large motor launches and the larger fin keel yachts generally bypass Ilfracombe on passage between Marina Berths, the ability to safely stay afloat at Ilfracombe would generate income).
- Afloat Commercial berths (this would release berths in the inner harbour throughout the holiday season and provide much greater operational flexibility to local operators).
- Cross Channel Ferry services would not be tidally restricted opening the way for larger more profitable vessels on cross and trans channel routes.
- Smaller Cruise liners could come alongside (this would provide a significantly improved destination offer).

- Permanent Operations and Maintenance facilities for the Atlantic Array and/or other offshore renewable energy operators.
- A lock gate providing:
 - a) A stable level of water in the harbour, allowing vessels to remain afloat, and the provision of improved facilities for residents and visitors.
 - b) Flood protection to the quays, businesses and residential properties around the Harbour area. (Flooding will occur in light of predicted rising sea levels and changing weather patterns).
 - c) Access from the Southern side of the harbour encouraging the movement of people around it (creating improved visitor circulation improves business).
 - d) A marina with up to 280 berths (the employment generated not only from Marina operations but the 'Café culture' generated from the created environment, would provide significant economic benefit).

4.5.3 A Southern Quay development is also a possibility in this area and discussions with RWE npower renewables are currently (2012) underway to understand their needs and ascertain the viability of delivering a facility for their use. Careful consideration will need to be given to access and co-location of a Watersports Centre on the adjacent land.

4.5.4 Smaller improvements such as providing a themed walking 'Fish Trail' around the harbour and improving the visual impact of Lantern Hill by improved management of the natural environment would improve and enhance the overall tourist experience.

4.5.5 The short term impact of 'quick win' smaller projects should not be underestimated, however, sustainable economic growth, as reported through NDC commissioned studies, can only be achieved by the provision of a new deepwater Maritime Gateway.

Rapparee and Larkstone Coves, their hinterland and approaches

- 4.5.6 There are three significant strands to development in this Area, neither of which can be approached in isolation.
- The first, and operationally significant, option is to build a Southern Quay from Larkstone East to provide sheltered moorings for Atlantic Array wind farm vessels or the Commercial fishing fleet. These protected berths, situated further to seaward than anything currently available, would greatly enhance the operational capability and flexibility of operators and provide a much larger tidal operating window. If Atlantic Array operations were to be based at Ilfracombe then some landside development would be required to house stores, mess rooms, offices and parking.
 - The second option in this area is the building of a Watersports Centre to provide bespoke accommodation for the many activities that currently take place in and around the harbour. Merging the requirements of the Centre with the needs of a commercial operation will require careful planning.
 - The third strand to development in this area is governed by the value of NDC land holdings above and between Larkstone and Rapparee Coves. In 2011 NDC commissioned a Land Value Study of the harbour area and the findings of the Study report¹¹ offers options for development that would provide a capital receipt for further investment. This is another Harbour study that has been taken into account in the formation of this Development Strategy.
- 4.5.7 The slipway and the access lane to Larkstone beach is in need of upgrade, repair and realignment, particularly for safe access for visitors and users of a Southern Quay and Watersports Centre.
- 4.5.8 Rapparee Cove is a much under utilised resource and over time it is the intention to encourage local and visitor use of the beach. The need

to improve and make safe both the approaches and surrounding cliff faces would be the first requirement before expressions of interest could potentially be sought for further development.

The Southern Harbour and St James' Park

- 4.5.9 The provision of new fisherman's stores including waste oil disposal point and bait storage cold room facilities is being investigated (2012) through the Fisherman's Local Action Group (FLAG). It is hoped to deliver this project in the short term. There are some outstanding safety works required on the Cove to segregate pedestrians from the working quay and roadway this work will be undertaken when the configuration of the fishermen's stores is known.
- 4.5.10 Development of the St James' Park site has also been considered as part of the Land Value Study. The IHB and NDC will consider the findings and recommendations of this study as part of the wider harbour development and potential for a capital receipt.
- 4.5.11 In 2007 an Ilfracombe Harbour Study undertaken by Terence O'Rourke presented a design response to some of the earlier work undertaken by Halcrow. A large part of that study focussed on how the land within this Area could provide an urban design led approach to reclamation of parts of the Harbour to provide wider quays, allowing development in the area of the Cove. The study was very progressive and forward looking and provided up to 8715 sq. m. of floor space development, with a mixture of residential and commercial build. Whilst not now considered to be realistic it does nonetheless highlight the latent potential available in this part of the harbour in the right economic conditions.
- 4.5.12 The extension of the Cove working quay to the East has been the subject of an earlier study and this option would provide much improved facilities for the commercial fishing fleet and potentially release the Cove for other uses. However, the IHB recognise that Quay space is at a premium in Ilfracombe and so needs to vigorously defend against the development of harbour side quays for residential or commercial property purposes.
- 4.5.13 If the Cove is to develop it's own character as a place to visit then it must become more pedestrian friendly and reduce the congestion

¹¹ CB Richard Ellis - Harbour Land Value Study

currently seen in the summer months to a minimum. This could require the closure of the Cove as a permanent through route for traffic, which would affect the Traffic and Parking Management Strategy locally. It therefore needs to be considered within the context of the wider issue of the movement of people and vehicles around the Town.

4.5.14 Smaller projects in this area of the Harbour include the provision of more stowage space for resident and visitor dinghies, as very little security can currently be offered to boat owners. The building of marinas in other harbours, and the increasing sophistication of the marine leisure industry, has resulted in a new generation of sailors who demand full access to electricity, water and minor repair facilities when alongside. Although rudimentary facilities currently exist at Ilfracombe they are very much in need of upgrade.

The Inner Harbour and Old Quay Head

4.5.15 There is little that can be done to improve the inner area of the harbour unless it were to become part of a marina facility in a much wider development. The widening of Quay Road, by the construction of a new quay face, is seen as an excellent option to provide pontoon berths along the quay with electricity and water supplies for visiting boats. The extended Quay would also provide the potential to bring a 'café culture' to the harbour without the significant economic and operational difficulties associated with full pedestrianisation. It is considered that reducing the conflict between pedestrians and traffic by installing traffic control measures on Quay Road would greatly improve the tourist experience. This must be done without losing car parking spaces or inhibiting vehicular access to the Pier Car Park.

4.5.16 Old Quay Head is Grade II* listed and presents NDC with a heavy financial burden for its ongoing maintenance. The structure continues to be unstable and a solution for its long term protection, as a key heritage asset for the Town, needs to be implemented within the life of this plan. The options available for this include:

- the building of protecting breakwaters to seaward to reduce damaging wave action

- the building of a marina with lock/sill gate to equalise the water pressure in and on the quay imposed by tidal action
- the encasing of the structure within a new build quay thus preserving it 'inside' a new structure

4.5.17 pontoons, berths and walkways could be established on the outer face of the Quay to provide further alongside berths and a safe area for visiting boat dinghy storage.

4.5.18 The seabed in the Inner Harbour is in equilibrium and apart from small seasonal differences rarely changes. The bed rock in the area associated with boat moorings is between 1m and 2m below the level of the sand and it is possible, if a marina were to be built, that this could be dredged to provide moorings for deeper draft vessels. Dredging and the Maintenance Dredging, required for a non marina protected inner harbour, would be prohibitively expensive.

4.6 Consultation

4.6.1 In order to produce this Development Strategy it was imperative that it had credibility and Stakeholder support. In order to achieve this the Board decided to phase consultation in order to engage with the key stakeholders from the outset.

4.6.2 The first consultation was to gauge reaction to and achieve agreement of the Board's Strategic Aim and Objectives. The responses to this consultation were all positive and in full agreement with the Aim and Objectives of the Board.

4.6.3 The second consultation focussed on the options for Development and appraisal to be found in Chapter 4 of this document. Once again all responses were in full agreement with direction the Board were following.

Chapter 5: The Development Strategy 2012-2026

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This Chapter sets out the Development Strategy for Ilfracombe Harbour. It has been divided into two main sections, which are:

- Phase 1 - Projects intended to be completed by 2017
- Phase 2 - Potential future projects

5.1.2 Not included in this chapter, or anywhere else in this document, is a detailed analysis of the economic, environmental, sustainability, design and planning effects of specific projects. These will require attention by NDC at a later date as projects come forward for implementation.

5.1.3 The rationale for developing the Harbour is the need to regenerate the Town and to provide a stimulus to an under performing local economy. The Town will be regenerated only through the provision of sustainable housing, employment growth, a revitalised tourism industry and improved access to key services and facilities. However, it is the Harbour that provides regeneration opportunities of sufficient scale to deliver the step change required to ensure the economic success for the Town and the region.

5.2 Phase 1 - Projects

5.2.1 Phase 1 projects are currently being investigated by NDC and plans for their implementation are at different stages of development. Projects A-E are all subject to a successful FLAG¹² bid, which is currently (2012) being drawn up. However, although the final detail of Project D is dependent on the outcome of the FLAG bid, it is part of an earlier programme of safety works which will require completion regardless of the success of the bid.

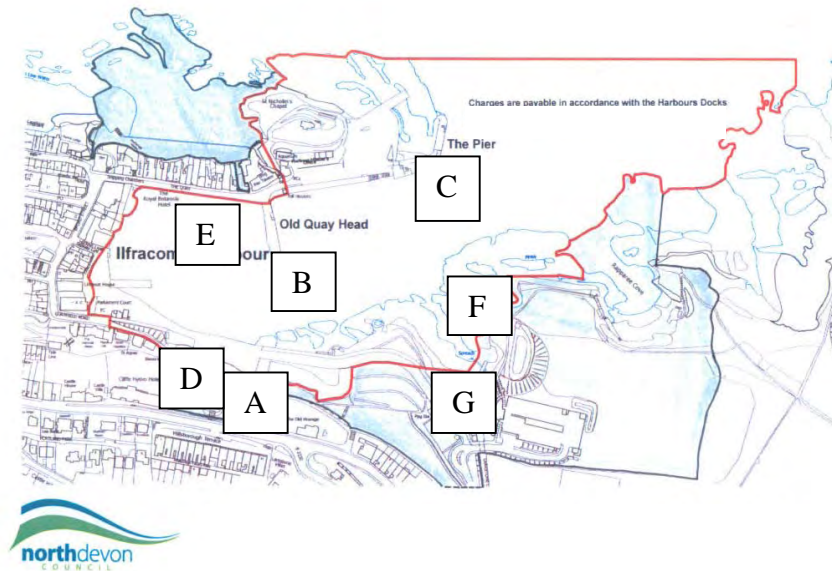


Figure 6 – Summary of Phase 1 Projects

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | Fisherman's Stores |
| B | Changing use of Fisherman's Stores on Old Quay Head |
| C | Improve vessel access arrangements – Step-outs |
| D | Pedestrian Walkway |
| E | Fish trail |
| F | Southern Quay |
| G | Operations and Maintenance base and Water Sports Centre |

¹² NDC is a member of the Fisherman's Local Action Group which has access to funding through the European Axis scheme.

5.3 Phase 1 projects – The Detail

5.3.1 A breakdown of each of the Phase 1 projects is summarised below:

A. Fisherman’s Stores

5.3.2 There has been a shortage of fit for purpose stores for fishermen at Ilfracombe Harbour for many years. This has been exacerbated by an increase in the numbers of fishermen and their equipment and has led to the situation where there are more operators than there are stores to operate from. Apart from the obvious difficulty of not having somewhere dry to work and store sensitive equipment it has led to an increase in equipment being left along quay edges and in public areas which has safety implications. The Northern Devon FLAG was formed in 2010 to deliver projects under Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). The provision of Fisherman’s stores was identified early on as an infrastructure project that could benefit from EFF monies and NDC are currently pursuing this. All commercial operators at the Harbour have been consulted about their individual requirements in order to ensure that the project has utility on delivery.

5.3.3 The stores would be situated at the Eastern end of the Cove in the ‘Dripping Well’ site and would provide modern facilities, including electricity and water, in bespoke accommodation which will be in keeping with the Heritage aspects of the site. As well as individual stores for each fisherman there would be a cold room for the storage of bait and a waste oil disposal facility.

B. Change use of Fishermen’s Stores on Old Quay Head

5.3.4 Old Quay Head is an ancient unstable structure, which is in regular need of expensive maintenance and repair. The seaward and most vulnerable section of the quay is currently used for commercial potting operations. The area sees the routine movement of heavy equipment and stores and the need to regularly land catch to heavy vehicles. This activity does nothing to protect the integrity of the fabric of the quay. A sensible solution would be to move the heavy operations associated with commercial fishing to the new stores

proposed for the Cove. This would then leave the Old Quay Head stores to be utilised for the lighter angling and diving charter vessels to help protect the quay from further damage.

C. Improve vessel access arrangements – Step-outs

5.3.5 The outer berths at Ilfracombe Harbour are called ‘East Face’ and ‘Stonebench’ and they were designed to allow the safe berthing of ships alongside. This was achieved by installing vertical wooden pile fenders on rubber mounts. The gap between ship and shore was bridged by the use of ship to shore gangways. Vessels that do not use gangways, such as trawlers, have some difficulty getting ashore when they are required for operational reasons to use these berths. This problem can be eased by installing quay edge extensions, ‘Step-outs’ between designated fenders, thus closing the gap over which crew have to cross to get ashore/onboard. The system has already been successful in other areas of the harbour and it is hoped that the EFF can deliver this project through the FLAG. NDC Engineers are working on the design and costing of the ‘Step-outs’.

D. Pedestrian Walkway

5.3.6 As part of the 2010 project to provide a segregated working area for Fishermen it was agreed to provide a painted walkway for pedestrians that led them away from the quay edge and fishing operations on shore. The uncertainty of the positioning of the new Fisherman’s Stores led to this aspect of the project being delayed to avoid incorrect positioning. It is hoped that if the FLAG project is successful then the pedestrian walkway can be installed as part of the project.

E. Fish Trail

5.3.7 This is another element of a FLAG bid, which will provide a themed walk around the Harbour from Lantern Hill in the North to the Fisherman’s Stores in the South. It is expected that the trail will provide a potted history of the Fishing Industry at Ilfracombe with a series of notice boards identifying not only the history but the techniques used and the species to be found in Northern Devon

waters. The trail will merge with the South West Coast Path, which also passes through part of the Harbour.

F. Southern Quay

5.3.8 NDC have been in discussion with the RWE npower renewables, who intend to operate the Atlantic Array Windfarm, in order to understand their requirements for an Operations and Maintenance Base. There are currently no protected, non tidally dependent, commercial moorings available at Ilfracombe Harbour and the large semi diurnal tides of the Harbour make it totally unsuitable, in its current form, for Windfarm operations. If Ilfracombe is to be developed to accommodate them, then new infrastructure will be needed.

5.3.9 Planning permission has yet to be granted for the Atlantic Array. However, early investigations have identified the area close to Larkstone to be the most suitable site for a new Quay if the expected minimum requirement is going to be met. The Quay would need to have a vertical face on its inner (West) side to allow pontoons and access bridges to be built. The outer face would need to be wave absorbing. The actual design would also need to ensure, through stringent wave modelling, that the effects of the new structure did not affect operations to the North on the Pier. It would also be imperative that any construction did not restrict any future development including the building of a lock gate/half tide sill.

5.3.10 NDC will progress this project as RWE’s intentions becomes clearer.

G. Operations and Maintenance Base and Water Sports Centre

5.3.11 If a Southern Quay were to be built for the operations and maintenance of the Atlantic Array Windfarm then adjacent shore side facilities would be required. Discussions with RWE npower renewables are taking place to tease out their exact requirements. However, details are uncertain other than that they would require Storerooms, Offices, Accommodation, Drying Room and Parking.

5.3.12 Larkstone Cove has also become the focus of a potential Water Sports development. The project proposes to house several local marine sports related groups under one roof and provide a safe new slipway from which to launch a variety of vessels.

5.3.13 As both projects move forward careful consideration must be given to the needs of both parties and any operational clashes ‘built out’ at the design stage.

5.4 Phase 2 Projects

5.4.1 Phase 2 projects almost exclusively rely on attracting private investment, grant funding and Local Authority support. Realistically this will only happen when the economy starts to recover, however, much work can be done to preposition and prepare for this upturn. Once again, each project will be considered separately, but always with the understanding that any individual development must eventually contribute to the whole.

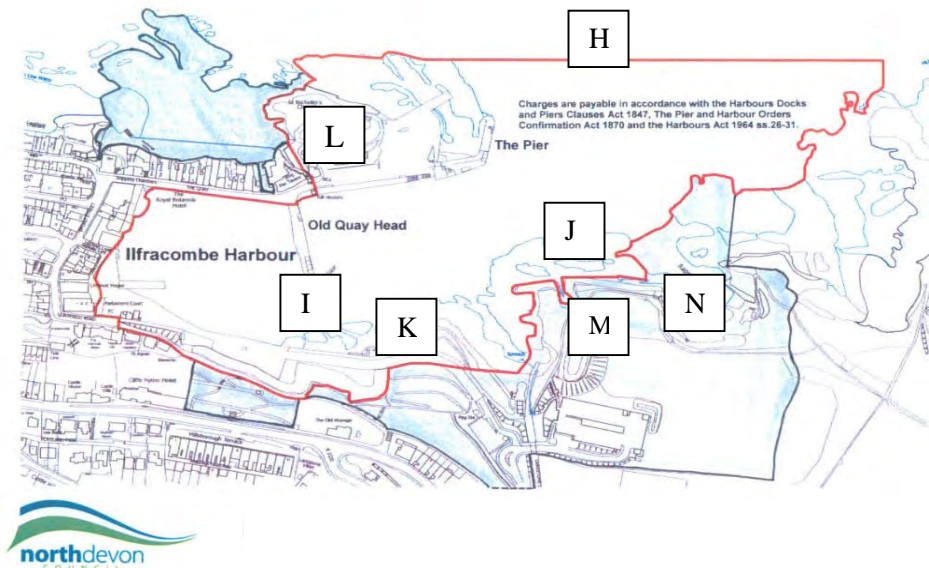


Figure 7 – Summary of Phase 2 projects

- H A Protecting Outer Breakwater
A Marina
- J A new Commercial Quay on Britons Rock
- K An extension of the Cove working quay Eastwards
- I L Development and Maintenance of Lantern Hill as a tourist attraction
- M Hotel development
- N Rebranding of Rapparee Cove

5.5 Phae 2 projects – The Detail

H. A Protecting Outer Breakwater

- 5.5.1 This has been considered since at least the 1980s, and the cost has always been regarded by NDC as unsupportable economically. However, comparison with the not dissimilar 2008 new Brixham fish quay funded by SWERDA, and discussions with the contractor involved, indicates that previous cost estimates for Ilfracombe may be overly high.
- 5.5.2 Although an Outer Breakwater is likely to be justifiable as a stand alone project many of the other listed Phase 2 projects can only be realised subsequent to, or in parallel with, the building of it. Accurate cost estimates would require benchmarking against comparable schemes in the last 3 years such as Brixham, Great Yarmouth and Peterhead. Some geological appreciation of the underlying Ilfracombe Slates and their integrity and capacity for driven or bored piling will have to be compiled. Visual aspects of a lower-cost design will have to be considered in the context of the overall harbour and its appeal to visitors and tourists.

I. A Marina

- 5.5.3 A Marina is an important contributor to employment, regeneration and tourism and earlier approaches from Marina developers show that a 280 berth Marina could be built at Ilfracombe. The close relationship between the Coastal Marine Sector and the wider tourism

and leisure industry has shown that it provides infrastructure and services for people wishing to participate in leisure boating activities. Marinas also serve as visitor attractions in their own right. It is considered that a Marina at Ilfracombe would have the potential to play a significant role in the wider economy, facilitating regeneration and impacting on residential and commercial property values.

- 5.5.4 Current trends within the leisure Marine sector require more protected berthing and greater access to the services, which only marinas can provide. Ilfracombe is ideally placed geographically to take advantage of this shift, being at the entrance to the Bristol Channel, mid way between the Marinas at Watchet and Padstow and the perfect ‘Day Sail’ distance from Marinas on the South Wales Coast.

- 5.5.5 Any marina design will require due consideration for lifeboat and commercial fishing operations, and the inclusion of facilities to maintain water level at lower tide states. It should be part of an integrated approach to the whole harbour area and will have to reflect the protected status of the Old Quay Head. Preliminary studies are available.

J. A New Commercial Quay on Briton’s Rock

- 5.5.6 With a protecting outer breakwater there is potential here for shore and pontoon access to commercially-driven quay facilities. Suitable investigation work could lay the foundation for collaboration with developers for further support operations for renewable energy operators, a new fish quay operations and potentially, in the long term, a Ro-Ro facility.
- 5.5.7 Larkstone Lane is the only viable access, and this route will need improvement. The area has the picturesque natural rock shore, and sensitivity in design will need to be shown to reconcile semi-industrial use with an attractive port for visitors.
- 5.5.8 There is a potential conflict for an industrial user with Marina boat movements and thought will have to be applied to suitable harbour regulation.

K. An Extension of the Cove working Quay Eastwards

- 5.5.9 An efficient working quay environment for fishermen should allow reasonable visitor access, which is an important element of an attractive harbour for most visitors and potential investors.
- 5.5.10 Traffic management measures allowing commercial access, while avoiding casual through traffic will have to be implemented.
- 5.5.11 Design considerations will need to include lifeboat movements and the re-location of the harbour wall, where the geology, amongst other things, will define the design basis.

L. Development and Maintenance of Lantern Hill as a Tourist Attraction

- 5.5.12 This is a low-impact proposal that could include improved and sensitive access and interpretation facilities and new seating. Extensive changes to appearance are undesirable.

M. Hotel Development

- 5.5.13 The land between Larkstone and Rapparee is NDC-owned and is under-utilised. There is potential for an ambitious hotel development on this site. This would affect the aspect as viewed from the West end of the harbour, but appropriate design together with protection of some tree cover could make this a visual asset rather than an eyesore. The development would be restricted to the area below Hillsborough. There will be opposition to this sort of development, but the contribution to the overall vision and therefore to the future of the town make this defensible.
- 5.5.14 Access will be from Larkstone Lane/Hillsborough Car Park, and will need to be suitable for the potential level of traffic.
- 5.5.15 The Ilfracombe Slates dip to the North in the area and development will require stabilisation of the cliff and area above Rapparee. Development could also be extended to the middle and upper

stretches of Larkstone Lane, where again some degree of slope stabilisation might be needed.

- 5.5.16 Despite the obvious engineering challenges of the area, the potential sales value will make these economically viable.

N. Rebranding of Rapparee Cove

- 5.5.17 This is an underused relatively isolated area that has become so due to its pedestrian access difficulties and poor visibility from the Town due to tree over-growth. Any changes here will have to be compatible with the development outlined in 5.5.13.

Chapter 6: Economic Impact Assessment

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The aim of this chapter is to provide an economic appraisal of the options highlighted in the Harbour Board's Development Strategy 2012-2026. This period has been chosen so that the Board's strategy can be linked to other local and regional strategies with a similar time frame. In the current world and national economic climate long term forecasts are particularly difficult, with high uncertainty, increasing with each year, thus reducing their value and validity.

6.2 Economic Impact Assessment

6.2.1 In calculating the impact of the Strategy and its projects, it is important to take account of what would have happened in the absence any development. This base scenario is referred to as the 'Do Nothing' case but without major development the Town and its region is likely to continue to under perform. Assessment estimates of additional employment and Gross Value Added (GVA) impacts of projects are gleaned from previously commissioned reports and indicate increases in Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and GVA over the 'Do Nothing' case.

6.2.2 The most recent work was undertaken by GHK Consulting in 2010.

“This study has identified a strong case for developing Ilfracombe Harbour to deliver regeneration impacts of a sufficient scale to drive change and act as a catalyst for growth in the local economy. Without the proposed developments, the town is likely to continue to under perform, without achieving its economic aspirations and potential”

(GHK / SWERDA / DCC / NDC Report, July 2010)

6.2.3 Previous research has focussed on either a 'Do Nothing', a 'Southern Development' or a 'Full Harbour Development' and it is these options that are referred to in this assessment. The Options Summary at para.6.3 presents the forecasts of direct FTE jobs in Ilfracombe. An integrated zoning of development options better serves a progressive

approach to regeneration and this Development Strategy follows that path. However, economic research for this new direction has yet to be taken.

6.2.4 Ilfracombe Harbour should be seen as a strategic component of the local and regional economy. At the heart of its long term, sustainable development is the imperative to retain and nurture economic activity at the Port and the direct and indirect employment that it supports.

6.2.5 In the current financial climate it is essential to investigate projects which return the maximum potential to unlock economic growth, as well as investigating every opportunity which requires little or minimum public funding.

6.2.6 The Ilfracombe Harbour Board and its Stakeholders recognise the importance of the harbour in providing a catalyst for local employment.



Figure 8 – Prince Edward talks to Harbour businesses

6.2.7 The economic and employment growth objectives are:

- To support existing Harbour activities and businesses, and maximise the employment opportunities they provide.
- To support the local and North Devon economy in general and the fishing and tourism sectors in particular.
- To identify projects that may require public sector funding support to improve the Harbour's essential infrastructure and sustain employment growth.

6.2.8 Success of this Strategy will promote a diverse range of employment activities, both within its focus of the Harbour and in the wider local economy. The GHK Economic Impact Assessment shows that the majority of new jobs could be created in the shoreside developments relating to the Harbour, with the potential for 264 FTE jobs in Ilfracombe, together with an additional 203 jobs in the North Devon area, and 172 in the wider South West region.

6.2.9 The Strategy must secure the retention and improvement of wharves, jetties and associated facilities for fish handling, pleasure cruise operations, bunkering and other businesses at the Harbour that support the Harbour's primary activities. There is potential for direct employment at the Harbour to increase steadily in these sectors which will bring benefits to the wider North Devon economy through tourism, including endeavouring to increase visitor numbers arriving on cruise ships.

6.2.10 The resilience of the local economy to national and global economic downturns should be improved by reducing the dependence on any one particular industry. However a balance must be struck as local industries should be provided with equal levels of support to prevent the decline of well-established and strategically important industries, such as boat repairs. The importance of ports and harbours is supported by the Draft National Policy Statement for Ports, which recommends that sufficient capacity is provided at ports enabling fast response to changing economic, emergency, and security conditions. A harbour's resilience will make it more sustainable in the long term.

6.2.11 The specific objectives for diversification and resilience are:

- To increase the potential for the Harbour to support and take advantage of the technological and economic development of the renewable energy sector.
- To provide accommodation for new Harbour-related activities and support the flexibility and inter-changeability of existing and future Harbour related uses and operations.
- To support tourism and leisure activities in Ilfracombe and the wider North Devon area.
- To ensure that Ilfracombe Harbour retains its ability to function as a viable port and fulfils its role as a Lifeboat base and the only harbour on the North Devon coast with direct access to the open sea.

6.3 Options summary

<u>'DO NOTHING'</u>	
Investment	
Full Time Equivalent Jobs	277
Gross Economic Contribution	£8,128,000
<u>SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT</u>	
Investment	£13,700,000
Additional FTE Jobs	112
GVA	£3,700,000
Return On Investment Ratio	2.8
<u>FULL HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT</u>	
Investment	£21,700,000
Additional FTE Jobs	264
GVA	£8,742,000
Return On Investment Ratio	4.5

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Next Steps

7.1 Conclusions

- 7.1.1 The Ilfracombe Harbour Board Development Strategy sets out a strong vision for a Harbour that has a significant long-term role in the economic prosperity of not only Ilfracombe but the wider area of North Devon and to seaward in the Bristol Channel. The Strategy will support existing businesses, nurture the growth of new economic sectors and - as a result - maintain and increase high-quality jobs in Ilfracombe and the local area.
- 7.1.2 There have been ambitious plans for harbour area development since the 1980s, but none have been realised. Despite the difficult economic circumstances prevailing at the time of compilation of this strategy it is felt that this is the right time to adopt an ambitious approach. The economy will improve in the short to medium term, there is a lot of private investment funding waiting for the right time and suitable opportunities, and the shift in emphasis by the Coalition towards greater local determination as evidenced by the floating of the *Community Budget Initiative* indicates that there is a new mood to allow community-led development to take place.
- 7.1.3 This change in emphasis from central to local government will not have been lost on private development funders. A significant change in approach from previous proposals will therefore require a proactive marketing approach to the private sector to set out the opportunities provided by an integrated suite of development projects in the harbour, covering residential, business, leisure and fishing interests and using a combination of private and public funds.
- 7.1.4 This vision is based on a sound understanding of current constraints and opportunities, and has been tested through a process of appraising options. This appraisal process has informed the development of the strategy, ensuring that it balances maximising opportunities for economic growth with planning policy considerations, sustainability issues and the views of local people.

- 7.1.5 The content and development process for the Strategy has been very positively supported by key stakeholders, particularly Ilfracombe Town Council. It is important that the momentum that has been gained through this process is maintained into the future, to turn the strategic vision into reality. The remainder of this chapter therefore sets out next steps to take the Masterplan forward in relation to:

- key issues;
- design guidance for specific projects; and
- funding and delivery.

Key Issues

7.2 Introduction

- 7.2.1 This section brings together and highlights key issues that are critical in delivering the strategy setting out, where appropriate, actions that will be required.
- 7.2.2 The individual development area proposals are set out independently in Chapter 5, and this approach has been adopted in order to allow a focussed and phased approach to planning development. It is important to note, however, that they should not be considered as stand-alone elements, but the combination of all is necessary to allow realisation of the full economic benefits of the vision

7.3 Further Consultation

- 7.3.1 The Strategy has been developed recognising that there is a wide range of interested parties (Annex B), and notes known views on the constituent elements of the strategy. This will be continued in more detail.
- 7.3.2 In addition, NDC Property and Technical Services and the Community and Leisure Service both have a strong supporting role to play in developing the harbour area vision, and an important role in its execution.

7.4 Heritage and Environmental Issues

- 7.4.1 As individual projects are developed, any proposals that may adversely affect the evidential, historic, aesthetic or communal value of heritage assets will need to be subject to assessment.
- 7.4.2 Similarly, as projects are developed, the environmental impacts of these projects will be subject to assessment, which may include full Environmental Impact Assessment and an appropriate assessment in relation to the Special Area for Conservation (SAC).

7.5 Accessibility

- 7.5.1 Accessibility from the south-east (Larkstone Lane) and the town centre will need to be reviewed in the light of significantly increased traffic in the case of land or marina development.
- 7.5.2 Configuration of the quay as a parking area will be reviewed in the light of new demand and income streams, as parking fees are currently a significant source of income.
- 7.5.3 Larger Cruise ships will continue to have to moor outside the harbour and land visitors by tender. However, it is possible that smaller vessels may be able to berth alongside a new outer breakwater.
- 7.5.4 Success in implementing this Development Strategy will inevitably impose a construction/building regime affecting large areas of the greater harbour area. Early consultation will need to highlight this issue, but it cannot be completely defused.

7.6 Next Steps: Consideration of specific projects

- 7.6.1 Phase 1 projects are currently being developed as detailed in Chapter 4. However, the IHB should continue to liaise closely with NDC to ensure that they are progressed to the point of delivery.

- 7.6.2 Phase 2 projects could be brought forward when the economy has improved sufficiently to provide public and private developers with the confidence to invest. A concerted effort should be made to identify potential partners for these projects and all leads followed through to closure.

7.7 Next Steps: Funding and Delivery

- 7.7.1 The Development Strategy has been assembled to provide a coherent overview of the vision achievable in the next 14 years. The development of the harbour has seen false dawns before, and it will only be achieved by adopting a broader and more proactive approach.

7.8 Funding Approach

- 7.8.1 Development on a scale that really benefits Ilfracombe will not come from public sector funding alone in the next decade. An approach that recognises the value of land surrounding the harbour, and its development potential will be necessary.
- 7.8.2 The value of that land will only be realised by adopting a phased approach that recognises the attraction of a true working harbour based on fishing and leisure. A busy working fishing fleet and quay, a prosperous marina and a range of shops and restaurants are huge attractions to potential apartment-owners as well as holidaymakers.
- 7.8.3 It is very probable that the best way to approach funding is by assembling a marketing package with which to approach a range of private developers. When some interest and traction has been gained there may be opportunities to approach public sector agencies to solicit interest for some form of match funding.
- 7.8.4 The IHB and its NDC advisors will need to agree an initial joint plan. This might include the commissioning of a marketing pack using and building on some of the material produced by completed studies¹³

¹³ See Annex A for list completed studies

7.9 Delivery Principles

7.9.1 Deliverability of the Development Strategy depends on the following factors:

- A coherent vision of a busy working harbour with significant development to the East and South.
- Investment of private funds by businesses to deliver various elements.
- Commitment of public funds to support business investment and the delivery process.
- Ability to obtain consents.
- Continuous partnership work within NDC and with wider stakeholders such as the North Devon AONB and Biosphere Service.
- Resolution of land issues to facilitate delivery.

7.10 Business Investment

7.10.1 Each of the businesses and funding agencies involved will need to contribute to decisions about scale, priority and timescales for investment, but the overall vision will need to be maintained.

7.10.2 The total level of investment proposed within relatively short timescales will imply significant construction work around the harbour and this will certainly affect existing businesses and tourism to some degree.

7.10.3 It will be important for the partners to co-ordinate with each other to minimise potential conflicts and maximise value for money in contracts.

7.10.4 It will be important to achieve a credible level of commitment to each of the projects identified in the Development Strategy as soon as possible, in order to start building a funding package of support from public agencies.

7.11 Public Funding

7.11.1 There are several potential sources of public funding available to support investment in the greater Harbour area;

- Funding by Devon Council/North Devon Council: the Councils can fund economic development projects and infrastructure projects through their own budgets and through borrowing.
- Grant for Business Investment (GBI) is available for assisted areas. Devon qualifies for some public intervention.
- The European Investment Bank provides loans to individual capital projects complementing EU cohesion and convergence activities.
- The Local Enterprise Partnership – Heart of the South West – has been allocated funding from the Government’s *Growing Places Fund*, which could provide a funding avenue.
- The Government’s Multi Million pound *Regional Growth Fund* supports projects and programmes that lever private sector investment. A further £1 billion has been allocated to this fund and bids for it will be accepted early in 2012.
- The *Coastal Communities Fund* will become fully operative in April 2012. It is a new fund designed to support the economic development of Coastal Communities.
- The *Big Lottery Fund* is currently under review and may provide opportunities in the future to help with funding of Community related Harbour development.

Ifracombe Harbour Studies Consulted

1. **Beckett Rankine Partnership Consulting Engineers**
Bristol Channel Study
dated April 1995
2. **Halcrow**
Ifracombe Harbour Development – Harbour Protection Works –
Outline Design Studies
dated November 1995
3. **Roger Tym and Partners**
Ifracombe Harbour Economic Impact Assessment
dated May 2007
4. **Terence O'Rourke**
Ifracombe Harbour Study
dated November 2007
5. **Scott Wilson**
Parking and Movement Strategy
dated June 2009
6. **Scott Wilson**
Utilities Report and Drainage Assessment
dated June 2009
7. **Scott Wilson**
Level 1 Flood Risk Assessment Report
dated June 2009
8. **Scott Wilson**
Ifracombe Regeneration – Harbour, Northern Quay and Breakwater
dated October 2009
9. **Alder King**
Ifracombe regeneration Areas – Baseline Report
dated October 2009

Annex A to IHB's Development Strategy dated 6th February 2012

10. **CACI – Property Consulting group**
Ifracombe Economic Research Report
dated July 2010
11. **GHK**
Ifracombe Harbour Regeneration Economic Impact Assessment
dated May 2010
12. **CB Richard Ellis**
Harbour Land Value Study
Draft dated January 2011

Key Stakeholders and Consultees

Annex B to IHB's Development Strategy dated 6th February 2012

External

Iffracombe Town Council

Iffracombe Harbour Community Forum consisting of the following stakeholder sub groups:

Boatman's Association

Commercial Fisherman's Association

Environmental Group

Greener Iffracombe

Harbour Development Group

Harbour Traders

Iffracombe Angling Association

Iffracombe and District Community Interest Company

Iffracombe and District Tourism Association

Iffracombe Sub Aqua Club

Iffracombe Yacht Club

Harbour Licensees and Restaurateurs

Pilot Gig Association

RNLI

Transform Neighbourhood Management

Residents Association

Internal

Property and Technical Services

Planning

Community and Leisure Services

Legal and Democratic Services

Financial Services

Planning Policy Documentation

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This section looks at recent changes in Planning and Economic Policy and places harbour development within the current and proposed local planning policy context.
- 1.2 The Government is currently pursuing proposals for reforms to the planning system to ensure that planning supports the sustainable development needed as the country emerges from recession. These include the introduction of the Localism Act¹³ as the centrepiece for the new planning system. A key Government objective is to shift some planning and decision making functions to local authorities and local neighbourhood levels. As a result, the Regional Development Agencies, including the South West RDA (SWRDA), are being abolished, and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South West is no longer to have policy status.
- 1.3 The removal of the RSS has caused great uncertainty, as its function was to set the high level context for local authority policy and so give a coordinated direction for the region. Local authorities now have the opportunity to review the policies within the RSS for their own areas and adjust if necessary their development plans, notably their Local Development Framework (LDF) core strategies.

2. Permitted Development Rights

- 2.1 Development of operational land in respect of a dock, pier, harbour, water transport, canal or inland waterway falls under the provisions for permitted development by statutory undertakers¹⁴. It sets out the works that constitute permitted development and for which further planning consent from the local planning authority is not required, these must relate to:

¹³ Localism Act 2011

¹⁴ Schedule 2, Part 17, Class B of the Town and Country (General permitted Development) Order 1995

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- (a) shipping; or
- (b) embarking, loading, discharging or transport of passengers, livestock or goods at a dock, pier or harbour.
- 2.2 The provision specifically excludes construction, or erection of a hotel, bridge or any other building not required in connection with the handling of traffic, or of any related educational building, car park, shop, garage or petrol filling station that is not entirely within the limits of a dock, pier or harbour.
- 2.3 Planning permission is required for any other development within the dock and harbour area that is not covered by the above permitted development rights. Applications will be determined by the local planning authority, North Devon District Council, or by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in the event of an appeal or call-in.
- ### **3. Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**
- 3.1 In July 2011, the Government published, for consultation, the draft 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF). The Government recognises that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and seek to find solutions to overcome any substantial planning objections where practical. The draft NPPF is a material planning consideration, but does not carry as much weight as policies in an up to date development plan.
- 3.2 The key Government objective within the draft NPPF is to facilitate economic growth through collaborative working with adjoining authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable economic growth through transport investment or strategies for the growth of ports.

4. Regional Planning Guidance (RPG)

4.1 Regional Planning Guidance for the South West, RPG10, was published in 2001 and is now dated in terms of policy context. However, in July 2010 the new coalition government made it clear that Regional Spatial Strategies were to be revoked and replaced with the Localism Bill to allow Councils to prepare their local plans without having to follow top-down targets. Whilst Regional Planning is still a material planning consideration when determining applications it is clear that the Government will abolish RPG10 and Regional Spatial Strategies by the end of 2012, although the evidence base to inform these strategies will remain as a material planning consideration when determining applications.

5. Local Planning Policy

5.1 Until the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) for North Devon Council is completed and adopted, the development plan policy framework for Ilfracombe is provided by the saved policies in the Devon Structure Plan, 2004, and the North Devon Local Plan, 2006.

6. Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016¹⁵

6.1 Saved policies within the Devon Structure Plan will be revoked once the Localism Bill is enacted. However, until such time as the document is formally abolished, it remains relevant. Some relevant Policies within the document are:

Policy ST15: Area Centres. The strategy proposes that the role for Area Centres (including Ilfracombe) should be developed and supported – through investment in infrastructure, facilities, communications and employment opportunities.

Policy TO1: Tourism Development in Resorts. (Ilfracombe is identified as a resort). This policy supports proposals for additional tourist accommodation and tourism facilities on a scale compatible

with existing development which would not adversely impact on the environment.

7. North Devon Local Plan 1995 – 2011

7.1 Until the LDF becomes adopted policy the North Devon Local Plan remains extant, and contains much relevant information Which has guided the formulation of the IHB Development Strategy.

7.2 Enhancement of the Harbour area is central to the regeneration of Ilfracombe. Early phases of the enhancement are now complete, but later phases to extend the Harbour and encourage more commercial and maritime interests may include:

- The creation of an inner harbour with floating berths for boats and other craft with half tide access over a sill;
- Additional seasonal berths in the outer harbour;
- The creation of an outer breakwater with deep water berthing for passenger ferry access, to encourage links to other locations in the Bristol Channel, which will also enhance the tourist experience of the town and the harbour.
- New commercial facilities to develop the fishing industry.
- New commercial and/or leisure developments

7.3 Proposals to improve the harbour area should take into account the biodiversity interests, particularly as it forms part of the Voluntary Marine Conservation Area (VMCA). However, such interests are not expected to prejudice any regeneration projects for the harbour.

7.4 The development of the Harbour and Harbour area also includes traffic management and pedestrian priority initiatives, such as reducing traffic on the Quay and making it a more pleasant environment for walking. As part of the overall enhancement of the harbour, high quality residential flats will also be permitted in the area which will improve the townscape of the harbour. Such development

¹⁵ Devon Structure Plan. "Devon to 2016" (Adopted 2004)

will also be expected to include measures to facilitate the enhancement of the harbour itself, including the creation of a marina.

7.5 Some relevant Policies are:

Policy DVS6: Flooding and Water Quality. This policy states that planning permission will not be granted for development where it results in an unacceptable risk of flooding; it would increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; would harm the water flow or water quality of coastal, surface or ground water, or it would harm fish stocks.

Policy REC7: Water Based Recreation. This policy states that a proposal for a water based activity will be permitted where:

- it is well integrated with existing development, or within the developed sections of the coast;
- it does not harm navigation, or conflict with the operation of commercial harbours and other existing maritime uses;
- it does not harm the character, or appearance of the area, public safety, or nature conservation interests; and
- any engineering or other works associated with development does not interfere with the natural movement of sediment to such an extent as to accelerate the process of coastal erosion, or deposition elsewhere.

The loss of a water based facility to other uses that do not require a water side location will not be permitted where it would harm the opportunity for water based recreation, or other maritime related uses.

Policy ILF7: Harbour Development. Proposals for Leisure, Tourism and/or Commercial development will be permitted in the harbour and harbour area where:

- it enhances the built heritage;
- it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the AONB, Heritage Coast and Conservation Area;

- it protects existing and does not prejudice new facilities for fishing vessels, pleasure cruise vessels, the lifeboat and yachts;
- it does not prejudice the achievement of pedestrian priority on Broad Street, The Quay, Quayfield Road and Fore Street; and
- adequate access and servicing provision is made for the development.

Other policies such as those relating to the AONB, CPA, Heritage Coast, Listed Buildings and Conservation Area may be relevant for particular proposals

8. The Joint North Devon & Torridge Core Strategy 2011 - 2031

- 8.1 The main part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) will be the Core Strategy which is anticipated for formal adoption in 2013/14. A pre-publication draft core strategy was published, for consultation, in January 2010. Delays in the progress of the Core Strategy due to uncertainty, have resulted from intended revocation of the draft RSS, from implications of the Localism Bill and the publication of the draft National Planning Policy Framework during 2011. Some relevant policies within the Core Strategy are:

Policy COR5(1e): Transportation Strategy. Provide good strategic connectivity by, ‘Developing enhanced harbour facilities, including at Ilfracombe, to support its passenger ferry facility’.

Policy COR12(1 and 2): Key Economic Sectors.

The growth of emerging or significant local economic sectors will be promoted, including, knowledge-based sectors, food and drink, retail, tourism, environmental and low-carbon technologies, marine technologies, creative industries, agriculture and land based industries, health and social care.

Support for large-scale sustainable tourism proposals that improve the overall quality on offer that are located within or around the main

towns or within established coastal resorts, and are in keeping with the scale and character of the locality.

Policy COR22(4, 5 and 6): Ilfracombe Development Strategy. Development in Ilfracombe during the period 2011 to 2031 will include:

- Design-led regeneration and enhancement of the town centre, harbour and sea front.
- Necessary infrastructure at the harbour to facilitate an operational hub for large scale off-shore renewable energy proposals.
- Regeneration of Ilfracombe as a quality tourism destination and for improved access to the surrounding coast and countryside, including the enhancement of the harbour and sea front and supporting ferry links with South Wales and Ireland.

9. Draft Vision for Ilfracombe within Core Strategy

- 9.1 Following community consultation in July and October 2011, stakeholder workshops sought to build upon previous public engagement and to satisfy the requirements of the new localism agenda to identify key issues for the town and to inform a draft spatial vision that is reflective of community aspirations. As a result of all the community responses, identified at the stakeholder workshop, a spatial vision for the town has been drafted. This draft vision will be included in an amended version of the joint Core Strategy:

The Draft Vision:¹⁶

*“Ilfracombe will be regenerated through sustainable housing and employment growth, **new ferry links** serving the town and Northern Devon, a revitalised tourism industry and improved access to key services and facilities. Design led regeneration of the town centre and enhancement of the **Harbour** and sea front will capitalise on the town’s built heritage, cultural assets, high quality landscape and*

coastal setting while safeguarding the Harbour and sea front from rising sea levels and facilitating its use as an operational port.”

10. Shoreline Management Plan

- 10.1 The objective of the SMP is to define, in general terms, the risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment, of coastal evolution within the SMP area over the next century.
- 10.2 Ilfracombe Harbour falls within the area ‘Morte Point to Foreland Point’ and is subject to two policy areas, 7d04 and 7d05.¹⁷ Within the policy area 7d04 the strategy is to ‘hold the line’ and maintain or upgrade the level of protection provided by the defences whereas within the harbour the strategy is to ‘advance the line’ and build new defences seaward of the existing defence line.

11. North Devon Marine Conservation Zones

- 11.1 Mermaid’s Pool in Westward Ho! to Foreland Point in Lynmouth (including the waters to the North of Ilfracombe Harbour) has been proposed by North Devon’s Biosphere Reserve, Marine Working Group as a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) for its rich biodiversity and important species, especially along its seabed. There may be restrictions on activities that would have an adverse impact on the seabed and foreshore features.
- 11.2 In consultation with ‘Finding Sanctuary’¹⁸ Ilfracombe Harbour has negotiated a zone in the sea area North of the Harbour, which is excluded from the MCZ to allow it to realise its future development ambitions.

¹⁷ North Devon and Somerset Coastal Advisory Group SMP 1/2

¹⁸ Finding Sanctuary are the regional body tasked with designing and implementing the network of MCZ’s in the waters around the South West

¹⁶ North Devon and Torridge Joint Core Strategy 2010

12. Other Planning Considerations

12.1 Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026

LTP3 recognises that it is the direct responsibility of North Devon Council to maintain Ilfracombe Harbour as a transport asset.

The only other recognition of Ilfracombe is as a Coastal Town, which allows bidding to the Coastal Communities Fund.

12.2 Heritage and Environmental designations

- Cliff Castle at Hillsborough is a major promontory fort and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- To the East of the Harbour, around Hillsborough, lie a number of landscape constraints including Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Coastal Preservation Area, and Heritage Coast;
- Hillsborough is also designated as a County Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve.
- The Harbour and surrounding coastline is within the Voluntary Marine Conservation Area.