



Public Agenda Item:

Title: **Tor Bay Harbour – Port Master Plan**

Wards Affected: **All Wards in Torbay**

To: **Harbour Committee** On: **8 March 2012**

Key Decision: **No**

Change to Budget: **No** Change to Policy Framework: **No**

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1. What we are trying to achieve and the impact on our customers

1.1 The aim of this report is to brief the Harbour Committee on the matter of port master plans and seek support for the production of a Port Master Plan for Tor Bay Harbour.

1.2 Master planning is not just for the benefit of regional and local planning bodies and local stakeholders but the process of producing a master plan should also benefit Tor Bay Harbour Authority.

2. Recommendation(s) for decision

2.1 That the Harbour Committee approve the need for Tor Bay Harbour to have a Port Master Plan.

2.2 That the Torbay Development Agency be asked to assist in the production of a Port Master Plan and that the Executive Head of Tor Bay Harbour Authority, in consultation with the Harbour Committee Chairman, be authorised to amend the harbour revenue budget as required to fund such a plan.

3. Key points and reasons for recommendations

3.1 This report provides Members with information on the main purposes of port master plans.

- 3.2 The need for a Tor Bay Harbour Port Master Plan was addressed in the 2011/12 Tor Bay Harbour Business Plan and that action has rolled on into the 2012/13 Business Plan.
- 3.3 A number of high profile harbour related aspirations such as the Northern Arm in Brixham, the 'Third' harbour for Torquay, the marina car park redevelopment in Torquay, a boat yard in Oxen Cove, a potential Maritime Centre at Broadsands, together with the Torbay Development Agency's work on Torbay's maritime economy mean that it is both appropriate and timely that the Harbour Committee should now consider the more immediate need for a port master plan.

For more detailed information on this proposal please refer to the supporting information attached.

**Kevin Mowat
Executive Head of Tor Bay Harbour Authority
Tor Bay Harbour Master**

Supporting information

A1. Introduction and history

A1.1 In 2010 the Department for Transport (DfT) issued 'Guidance on the preparation of port master plans'. The main purposes of port master plans are to:

- clarify the port's own strategic planning for the medium to long term;
- assist regional and local planning bodies, and transport network providers, in preparing and revising their own development strategies; and
- inform port users, employees and local communities as to how they can expect to see the port develop over the coming years, typically within a 25 or 30 year time horizon.

A1.2 A port master plan achieves its purposes by setting out:

- how the port expects to grow and develop its business over time;
- why this is feasible in the context of wider patterns of supply and demand;
- where changes of land-use are likely to be required to support growth areas;
- what alternative ways of meeting demand have been and will be considered;
- what environmental measures will be taken to ensure that not only are adverse effects mitigated, but as far as possible the port makes a positive contribution to the environment and amenity;
- when individual development proposals will be put forward;
- how people will be consulted — both within the master planning process itself, and beyond; and;
- how the port's development plans integrate, support and inform the regional and local economic, transport and planning policy context as the result of close liaison with local and regional planning bodies during the production of the master plan.

A1.2 Tor Bay Harbour Authority and Torbay Council will benefit from a port master plan in a number of ways :-

- engaging with local and regional planning bodies at an early stage of expansion plans will allow harbour development to be incorporated at various levels of spatial planning and will help to secure the buy-in of these crucial stakeholders;
- keeping local stakeholders informed of the business direction of the harbour will help the harbour to build good working relationships locally;
- being clear and transparent about demand forecasts and expansion plans will raise the profile of the harbour both locally and regionally; and
- strategically considering future developments will reduce the lead-time for individual projects when they come to fruition.

- A1.3 A port master plan is *not* intended to be rigid and inflexible. Ports and harbours operate in a commercial world and it is essential that they should have the flexibility to adapt to changing patterns of demand, and to competitive opportunities. The master plan should therefore present a framework within which such adaptation can occur without undue bureaucracy.
- A1.4 The DfT guidance states that '*smaller ports with modest growth aspirations may consider that the scale of their projected development does not justify the managerial resource input required to produce a good master plan. But there will be exceptions on either side of this threshold: major ports at the smaller end of the range which do not foresee growth, and currently minor ports, or promoters of wholly new facilities, whose aspirations give them a clear interest in securing the buy-in of those who will become engaged, sooner or later, in the planning system. We encourage ports of any size to produce a master plan where they see that it would be beneficial for them to do so*'.
- A1.5 Every master plan will be different depending on the size of a port and the extent of plans for future development. The DfT encourages ports to vary the scale and scope of their master plan in accordance with these factors. In the South West region both Poole Harbour and Falmouth Harbour have recently completed their port master plans.
- A1.6 Critically port master plans should feed into regional and local planning strategies. Close liaison with regional and local planning bodies during the preparation of a master plan benefits the port by ensuring that its development intentions are represented in the appropriate spatial plans. This is very important in Torbay, where coastal land has a very high monetary and amenity value; and a large amount of the marine environment is protected under a Special Area of Conservation.
- A1.7 In the future, a port master plan could also usefully feed into the marine plans proposed under the Marine and Coastal Access Act.
- A1.8 There are some port development activities that do not need approval through the planning system because they fall within the port operator's Permitted Development Rights. Such an activity may be, for example, the erection of warehousing buildings associated with the handling of port cargoes, or change in the configuration of internal roads. It would be useful for the port master plan to outline the port's future intentions for such activities if they are known.
- A1.9 The DfT has given qualified support to the **safeguarding** of dormant port operational land. Any port master plan should set out and briefly justify the port's desired safeguarding strategy and the port should discuss this, as with other aspects of the master plan, with the relevant planning bodies. The master plan should note the extent to which the desired safeguarding is already reflected in regional and/or local planning documents; or is otherwise endorsed with a view to future inclusion.

A1.10 A port master plan should normally include an assessment of the projected economic and social effects of port development. This might include, for example, employment and any regeneration benefits, as well as consideration of any negative effects of development, for example relating to any disruptive effect of HGV traffic on local communities.

A1.11 The port master plan should set out the expected environmental impacts of potential future developments, and should then outline (a) the mitigation measures intended to reduce these impacts and (b) any measures intended to offset the residual impact.

A1.12 There is no legal requirement for a port to produce a master plan.

A2 Risk assessment of preferred option

A2.1 Outline of significant key risks

A2.1.1 There are no significant key risks.

A2.2 Remaining risks

A2.2.1 There is a risk that, in the absence of a port master plan, Tor Bay Harbour Authority and Torbay Council will be unable to clarify their own medium to long term strategic planning for the harbour; and therefore fail to assist regional and local planning bodies in preparing and revising their own development strategies; and also fail to inform harbour users, employees and local communities as to how they can expect to see Tor Bay Harbour develop over the coming years.

A3. Other Options

A3.1.1 There is no legal requirement for a port to produce a master plan.

A4 Summary of resource implications

A4.1 The cost of producing a port master plan for Tor Bay Harbour will need to be met by the Tor Bay Harbour Authority business unit. If the Harbour Authority submits a bid for EU Interreg funding it will include up to £25,000 towards the cost of a port master plan.

A4.3 Resource support for the writing of a port master plan for Tor Bay Harbour has been offered by the Torbay Development Agency (EDC).

A5 What impact will there be on equalities, environmental sustainability and crime and disorder?

A5.1 None.

A6 Consultation and Customer Focus

A6.1 Engagement with interested parties including local/regional planning bodies, local stakeholders and the local community, both during the master planning process and once the master plan has been published, will be an essential aspect of an effective master plan.

A7 Are there any implications for other Business Units?

A7.1 A number of other Business Units will need to engage with the process of producing a port master plan for Tor Bay Harbour.

Appendices

None

Documents available in members' rooms

None

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

Guidance on the preparation of port master plans - Ports Division, Department for Transport (2008 ~ 2010)