

The Riverside Boatyard Application

The Riverside boatyard which is situated on the Hamble at Bursledon between the railway bridge and the M27 bridge submitted a planning application to Eastleigh Borough Council to install a further 108 metres of pontoon in a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) adjacent to unspoiled marsh land which is also protected.

The Solent Protection Society objected on a number of grounds. The first being the potential damage to the environment. It is interesting to note that the Hants and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust also objected, whereas Natural England did not. SPS has written to Natural England highlighting this situation.

The SPS also objected on grounds of navigational safety and the loss of amenity to local river users and also for walkers enjoying the river from a public footpath. At low tides the reduction in the width of the channel would have been sufficient to prevent or discourage the use of the upper Hamble by the many small craft such as kayaks, rowing boats, small tenders and sailing dinghies. Larger vessels are unable to pass the A27 road bridge and all small craft are launched nearer to the river mouth and must pass through this area to enjoy the unspoiled and wooded beauty of the upper Hamble.

Eastleigh Borough Council rejected the application on all three of the above grounds, as well as for inadequate parking and for being contrary to saved policies on boatyard development and urbanisation. The Solent Protection Society is pleased to have helped protect this part of the Solent and its rivers.