

### **Wightlink's new high level loading ramp at Fishbourne.**

SPS sent in a number of comments on this planning application. While broadly supportive for the benefit of the Island we were concerned about the solid nature of the ramp sides and would have preferred something more lightweight in appearance. We supported suggestions for a reduction in the speed limit to 5knots and requested a seabed survey in advance of the new ferries coming in so that the impact on the mud flats and possible erosion can be properly monitored. We were also concerned to reduce light pollution.

The application was approved in April and while the design of the ramp was not changed SPS was specifically mentioned in the officer's report. The 5 knot speed limit for the bigger ferries and the seabed survey and monitoring regime have been agreed by Wightlink and will be a legal agreement. There is a condition concerning lighting.. An extract from the officer's report is reprinted below.

*In response to concerns raised by Natural England, the Environment Agency and Solent Protection Society, the applicants have provided Further Environmental Information (FEI) that proposes to reduce the speed of new ferries by 0.5 knots (between Wootton Beacon and the terminal) so that their speed and drawdown would replicate that of the existing ferries. Moreover, the FEI proposes a monitoring scheme for the speed of vessels and their impact on the topography of the seabed, the results of which would be made available to relevant regulators and Natural England. The speed reduction and monitoring regime would be secured by a legal agreement*

SPS is pleased that our representations were, to a large extent, taken on board – excuse the pun!