

**Urban Splash (South West) Limited**

**ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT  
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
EAST WHARF  
WATCHET  
NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

with a mixed use development  
comprising residential, commercial,  
marine and boat workshop storage and office,  
community uses and associated access,  
parking and public realm improvements

D2 Planning Ref: 29/06

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August 2008

## **1 NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

### **About the application**

- 1.1 This Non Technical Summary forms part of the Environmental Statement (ES) which accompanies the application for development at East Wharf, Watchet to facilitate a mixed use development set amongst new public realm with access provided from Harbour Road.
- 1.2 The planning application has been submitted on behalf of Urban Splash (South West) Limited

### **Background**

- 1.3 The East Wharf site has been identified as being a development opportunity by West Somerset District Council within their West Somerset Local Plan. A Design Brief for the site was prepared by LDA and was adopted by the District Council in 2002. The application has been based on the principles outlined in the Design Brief but also following discussions with the Local Planning Authority and other key stakeholders and interest groups.

### **About the Site**

- 1.4 The site is located on the eastern bank of Watchet Marina and is approximately 1.4 ha in size. The site is generally level but the adjacent ground slopes steeply upwards to the east and south east.
- 1.5 The site is covered with hardstanding which is used for boat storage/maintenance and car parking. A warehouse is located approximately in the centre of the site and is in a state of disrepair, other buildings located within the site include a small sub station, banded waste oil disposal points, a library and the Watcher Harbour Office.
- 1.6 The site is accessed via Harbour Road which runs from the southwest and into the site between the library and Harbour office.

### **The Proposed Development**

- 1.7 The development comprises:
  - i) Demolition of all buildings on the site;

- ii) 86 apartments (1 & 2 bed);
- iii) Retail, café and workshop space.
- iv) Marina office and Museum;
- v) Boat workshop and storage area;
- vi) Tourist Information office and associated community space;
- vii) Improvements to public realm;
- viii) The building would range from 3-6 storeys in height to provide sea views.
- ix) Parking for residential, workshop and community use, bus and coach drop off point, living facility and parking.
- x) A vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Harbour Road.
- xi) Construction of the development will take approximately 21 months.

### **Planning Context**

- 1.8 The proposed development is consistent with existing statutory development plan policy, and meets the requirements of the adopted design brief for the site.
- 1.9 Issues raised in specific policies with regard to the protection of the environment, transportation, cultural benefits, landscape etc. have been directly/indirectly addressed in the assessment provided in this ES and the accompanying documents.

### **Human Related Impacts**

- 1.10 The proposed development would increase the population of the area by an estimated 5%. In the context of the surrounding area, this degree of change would not lead to any harm in itself. The effect of population increase is therefore considered to be neither beneficial nor harmful.
- 1.11 The housing provided on the site would have a beneficial impact, as a range of dwellings would be provided on a previously developed site. Maximising provision of housing on the site would help reduce the pressure for housing on other sites. The increase in housing is therefore considered to be beneficial.

- 1.12 The increased demand for services, facilities and amenities arising from the proposed development will partly be met within the development itself. Those facilities that cannot be met on site, for instance all of the new residents' shopping needs, will lead to a beneficial effect as local services will have more patrons. The new commercial and recreational facilities within the site will be of benefit to the existing population. Additional community facilities resulting from the development such as education will be met, which will mitigate against the otherwise potentially adverse effects of increased demand. With no harm to existing facilities, the improvement in recreational and leisure opportunities, and the increased support for existing local businesses, the effect on services, etc. is therefore considered to be beneficial.
- 1.13 In the past, the site generated a low amount of employment. The site is allocated in the Local Plan primarily for a mixed use development; therefore development of part of the site for employment is consistent with the Council's objectives. The scale and type of employment development within the application accords with the aspirations of the Development Brief. Along with the other uses within the mixed use development, the proposal will create a variety of job opportunities. Due to the absence of employment on the site and the new job opportunities to be created, it is therefore considered that the employment effect of the proposed development is beneficial.
- 1.14 The site is a closed site due to health and safety reasons. The development proposals would create new links across the site, which would increase the permeability of the area, and help encourage travel by foot and cycle. The opening of the site is therefore considered to be a local benefit.
- 1.15 On balance the effect of the proposed development under this heading will be beneficial rather than harmful.

### **Transportation**

- 1.16 The Transportation Assessment accompanies the planning application. The findings will make no material impact on the highway capacity to the network which is operating under capacity. Indeed it will enhance local road safety with the installation of a mini roundabout at the Harbour Road/Brendon Road junction.

- 1.17 The site is in a highly sustainable location. It is possible to walk and cycle to the centre of Watchet. Public transport provision is also good.
- 1.18 Overall it can be concluded that the proposed development can be accommodated within the transport network and that the highway improvements will improve the situation over and above that which currently exists.

### **Cultural Heritage**

- 1.19 The assessment of archaeological potential concludes that the site has limited archaeological potential and that a watching brief be undertaken during construction work.

### **Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 1.20 The impact of the proposed development on the character areas and key view points is assessed and mitigation measures proposed to minimise impact and enhance visual amenity and landscape character.
- 1.21 The implications of an alternative ‘do nothing’ scenario is explored and the robustness of the analysis tested.
- 1.22 The proposed development will not have a significant detrimental impact on the landscape character of the site. In the majority of cases, the proposals will enhance the relationship of the site to its neighbours and the conditions within the site itself. With the increased public access and removal of intrusive boundaries, the introduction of green links, parks and square the neighbourhood will experience improved visual and landscape amenity.

### **Biodiversity and Nature Conservation**

- 1.23 The ecological assessment was based on results from a combination of desk study and field surveys. Further information was obtained through consulting the recognised bodies involved in the nature conservation within the area. The nature of the ecological features identified through those surveys was interpreted within the overall context of the surrounding area survey recognised guidance.

- 1.24 There is little of ecological value on the site. The proposed development will largely affect habitats of negligible value whilst habitats of some value namely a small area of scrub, woodland and rough grassland could be retained.
- 1.25 There is no evidence to suggest that there are any overriding ecological constraints to the proposals for the study area. The development proposals are in conformity with national and development plan policies and as such it is concluded that there are no ecological reasons to preclude development within the study area.

### **Flooding, Groundwater and Drainage**

- 1.26 A number of potential impacts have been identified within the accompanying technical reports. These have been assessed in terms of the likely magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receptor giving an impact significance rating. Where appropriate mitigation measures have been identified which if implemented would help to reduce the significance of the impacts to an acceptable degree e.g. flood risk, ground water protection and drainage.

### **Noise**

- 1.27 The impact of noise from the proposed development has been assessed. Various noise sources have been identified and quantified namely from:-
- i) New mechanical services plant
  - ii) Traffic
  - iii) The café function room and retail units
  - iv) The relocation of the boat storage/workshop area and
  - v) Construction noise for a limited period
- 1.28 None of the above will be at levels which will be detrimental to any key receptors.

### **Summary**

- 1.29 Many of the effects described above are experienced as people move through the area and at distance from the site. The primary areas of change are associated with the site area itself, but some are such that are considered to be problematic to the development proceeding.

### **Availability of the ES**

- 1.30 Copies of this ES can be purchased in hard copy format for £100 or electronically on CD for £50 from Urban Splash at the address below.

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