

2 Site description

Contents

2	Site Description	2-1
2.1	Site location	2-1
2.2	Brief site history	2-1
2.3	Outline of existing conditions	2-7
2.4	The context of regeneration	2-7
2.5	Key environmental features of site and surroundings	2-8

Figures

Figure 2—1 Site Location..... 2-3

Figure 2—2 Key areas of site..... 2-5

2 Site Description

2.1 Site location

The site is located within the town of Hayle on the north coast of Cornwall within a sheltered estuary approximately 5.5 miles south-east of St Ives, 8 miles north-east of Penzance and 6 miles south-west of Camborne (see Figure 2.1).

The site consists of;

- a main harbour area located within the town of Hayle, which includes three main quays
- areas of dunes and agricultural land to the north of the harbour

See Figure 2.2.

2.2 Brief site history

Whilst not quite the cradle of the Industrial Revolution, Hayle can claim to have made a major impact upon industrialisation worldwide in the 19th Century. It is this industrial heritage which is crucial, both to the current nature of Hayle and to the proposals for regeneration.

Hayle is not, and never was, a picturesque Cornish fishing village. Neither is Hayle a natural harbour. The very nature of the waters in and around the Harbour is an artificial construct, deriving directly from competition between the two industrial giants: Harvey's Foundry and Trevithick on the one hand; and the Cornish Copper Company on the other. The great features of the estuaries of the Hayle and Angarrack rivers: Carnsew Pool, Copperhouse Pool, the harbour itself, the triangular spit and cockle bank (see Figure 2.2), are all products of that industrial competition. They were constructed to allow an unnatural harbour to be kept clear and create sufficient depth of water to allow the large ships of the day to service the two foundries and take away their products.

Both North and South Quays would have presented a picture not dissimilar to the industrialised towns of the North. Both foundries built their own ships and also ships for others. Railway lines linked the main line to all the quays by around 1850. From the end of the 19th Century through to the end of the First World War, the large factory of the National Explosives Company was one of only two producing cordite for the Royal Navy. Between the wars the shipyard on South Quay became the ship breakers yard of Thos W Ward Ltd, scrapping ships surplus to requirements after the War. During the Second World War, North Quay was the site of the only ICI factory making the fuel additives crucial to combat aircraft. At the beginning of the 20th Century, North Quay became the site of a power station, serving most of West Cornwall with electricity and getting its coal from South Wales by sea. The advent of nuclear power saw its demise in 1979.



Hayle Harbour

Site Context Plan

Figure 2.1

scale 1:10,000

print at A3

date November 2007

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2.3 Outline of existing conditions

By the beginning of the 1980s, Hayle had largely taken on the form seen today. Virtually all of the industries had gone; along with most of the buildings. What remained was the basis of the historic sluicing system and the equally historic and significant harbour walls.

The site can be divided into eight distinct areas (see Figure 2.2):

- Copperhouse Pool
- Carnsew Pool
- North Quay
- South Quay
- East Quay
- Triangular Spit
- Harbour
- Existing agricultural areas referred to as Riviere Fields and Hilltop

Both North and South Quays are now largely derelict. Areas on both these Quays are used by the local fishing fleet and there is some storage of boats for repair work. Chieftain's Yard on North Quay was previously used for oil storage and is still used for aggregate operations, whilst the ICI "Octel" building is in partial use, including a café. The original Customs House is now the office of Hayle Harbour Management Ltd, the harbour operator; a part of ING Ltd.

East Quay is occupied by a small boatbuilder and a shellfish wholesaler, whose indoor tanks are used to "fatten up" the shellfish. The base of the old power station still remains at the end of North Quay, adjoining the main sub-station for this part of Cornwall. A line of sandstone and mudstone cliffs backs North Quay. Made ground, a relic of long-dead copper mining, is found above this. Beyond North Quay are "the Towans", "Hayle Towans" and "Riviere Towans", areas of extensive dunes including an area of chalet dwellings, characteristic of sections of the North Cornwall coast. The area above Copperhouse Pool is, and has always been, in agricultural use.

2.4 The context of regeneration

Hayle Harbour represents, perhaps, the most significant area of derelict land in a single ownership within the South West. Its lack of development has prevented the effective economic growth of Hayle for the best part of half a century. The South West's Regional Spatial Strategy and the South West's Regional Economic Strategy

and Business Plan recognise the priority to be given to Hayle in finally achieving its regeneration. Penwith District Council regards the regeneration of Hayle as their greatest priority.

The development proposals have been designed with the aim to address the clear need to make a contribution to the economy of West Cornwall through the creation of a sustainable community at Hayle Harbour, linking effectively the new and existing elements of Hayle.

2.5 Key environmental features of site and surroundings

The following were identified during scoping as key features of the existing environment which could potentially be sensitive to environmental impacts, and/or could have implications in terms of the significance of the likely environmental impacts:

- **Sensitive ecological areas** – The site and surrounding brownfield and greenfield areas are known to support important ecological communities. Known sensitive areas include Carnsew and Copperhouse pools which lie within the Hayle Estuary, Carrack Gladden SSSI (see Figure 12.2), a colony of rare liverwort called Petalwort on the Triangular Spit, and South Quay and dune grassland habitats at in the towan areas
- **Sensitive water resources** – The proximity of the site to sensitive waterbodies was identified as having implications in terms of risk of water pollution from construction and operational activities including remediation works as well as the impacts from any planned discharges or abstractions
- **Shellfish fishery** - Hayle supports one of the most significant crustacean fisheries in the UK. Water quality is critical to the preservation of this fishery
- **Areas important for protected species** - The proposals are located within an area of brownfield and greenfield habitat supporting an important ecosystem including legally protected species such as bats and reptiles
- **Transport routes** – The provision of a new major residential, leisure and retail destination will potentially have impacts on the existing road network as well as public transport services and parking
- **Historic areas** – The whole of the site is located within a World Heritage Site. The site is of historical significance and parts lie within a Conservation Area. The site contains a number of listed and locally listed buildings. From a historical perspective, the sluicing system represented by the Carnsew Tunnels, the buried mitregate sluice and the listed quay walls and associated structures, together with the two pools – Carnsew and Copperhouse, all require preservation and reinstatement

- **Existing site type** - The site that is proposed for development is predominantly a brownfield site. The government has set a target (in PPS3 - currently under consultation) that by 2008 at least 60% of new housing is to be provided on brownfield land
- **Contaminated land** - The site is currently known to be contaminated from previous land uses. This will have issues in terms of construction waste disposal and potential ground and water pollution
- **Flooding** - The site lies in an area at risk from tidal flooding (and to a lesser extent fluvial flooding). The existing flood defences only provide a level of protection equivalent to a 1 in 50 year tidal storm. This is below the required standard of flood defence performance
- **Socio-economic** - The project is likely to have an effect on security, community cohesion, employment and economic conditions. These effects are likely to be positive but careful design will be needed to ensure this
- **Energy** - St. Ives Bay will be the site of a major new initiative in renewable energy – the WaveHub Project, aimed at testing the ability to produce commercially viable wave-generated energy. Hayle Harbour will be the on-shore terminal of the power cable and the potential base of operation for the companies carrying out this experiment