

7.0 PARK AND SAIL

7.1 Introduction

The Barbican is currently the primary point of embarkation for visitors using water transport services. Visitors arrive in the Barbican by coach on organised tours or independently. The majority of independent visitors will arrive by car having parked in one of the city centre car parks.

The introduction of Park and Sail at a location outside the city centre would allow visitors to travel to the city centre by boat and water transport tours to start at an accessible location with coach drop off and parking facilities. Easier access to water transport services could enhance its attractiveness to visitors and thereby increase demand. The benefits for the City would include a reduction in demand for city centre car parking and coach facilities.

The previous Water Transportation Study concluded that the contribution that Park and Sail could play in generating demand should not be underestimated and to delay its development risked losing on which to provide parking. In the intervening period no sites have been safeguarded for Park and Sail use and the opportunities that remain are now limited.

Park and Sail is primarily seen as a service for visitors and seasonal operation may therefore be appropriate. The mode changes and travel times are unlikely to make it attractive for commuters.

7.2 Appraisal of Potential Sites

Only two sites, one on the Embankment and one on Breakwater Road, appear to have potential as Park and Sail locations.

The Embankment/Laira

The Blagdon Boatyard area, between Embankment Road and the River Plym has the potential to accommodate a sizeable car park for Park and Sail. It is a valuable 'prime location' that has been the subject of earlier planning applications and another has been recently lodged. In the Local Plan (1995-2011) First Deposit the area is subject to Policy 3 stating that planning permission will be granted for marine uses only falling within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 or for other marine sector uses which directly support development of the marine sector. The current planning application includes proposals for a three storey hotel with a fitness centre, a restaurant and more than 90 flats.

There is concern over the amount of dredging that may be required to ensure access for a ferry at all tides and the difficulty in disposing the material. At low tides the existing channel effectively dries out. At high tides the headroom under Laira Bridge is restricted to 4.9m. hence a vessel may have to be purpose built. It would not be readily accessible by the local population, being remote and on the far side of the dual carriageway into the City, and hence of little value for non-leisure trips.

However, the Blagdon’s Boatyard site is ideally located for coach and non-local car borne visitors to be conveyed onwards to the various waterfront attractions and indeed the City Centre. As a Park and Sail site it would conform to the designation in the Local Plan and be a less damaging and controversial use of the area. The site could also potentially be used as a bus based Park & Ride site on a regular or major event basis. A new junction would be required onto Embankment Road and this could incorporate pedestrian crossing facilities, which are badly needed in this area. At this location highway signing would be easy and effective and vehicles would be kept out of the City Centre and Barbican. During winter months when a Park and Sail facility would not be cost effective, the site could have an alternative use as a boat storage area.



Laira Road and Rail Bridges

Without details of the shape of the site that could be made available as a Park and Sail site only a very approximate estimate of the capacity can be provided. Additionally the degree of vehicle/pedestrian separation and soft landscaping provided will affect capacity. The following should therefore be viewed as a likely minimum requirement:

Special Events Park & Ride bus facility	1,575 sq. m.
Coach parking	135 sq. m per coach.
Car parking	25 sq. m per car.

For example, a 20 space coach park and a 200 space car park would occupy:

Special Events Park & Ride bus facility	1,575 sq. m
20 space Coach Park	2,700 sq. m.
200 space Car Park	4,600 sq. m
Total space requirement	8,875 sq. m. i.e. 2.2 acres

The Blagdon’s site provides of the order of 8,600 sq. m.

The problems of low tide access and clearance under the Laira Bridge could be resolved by the creation of a landing stage on the south side of the Laira Bridge. Two possible arrangements for access from the Park and Sail site to a landing stage on the south side of the bridge have been identified.

A railway line runs past the south end of the site through to Cattedown. Access to it would be across a cycle track. The rail line is very lightly used for occasional bulk fuel movements. The potential exists, and perhaps should not be lost, to run a connecting train service between Blagdons Boatyard and a pontoon at Cattedown. Work has taken place on Cattedown Wharves and there is a gap between its northern extent and existing businesses where access to the waterside could be obtained. At this location there appears to be room for a small siding. When water access via water to Blagdons is denied, through low or high tide, or indeed at all times, the connecting rail link could be brought into use. For security purposes in this commercial area it would seem sensible to have a building that would house the rail vehicle overnight. The complexity of operating a rail link and the need to change mode are significant disadvantages with this option.

Alternatively, a road-train could run along the existing riverside path and then along a new branch off this path and through the archway under Laira Bridge closest to the river. This archway is currently closed and used for boat storage. This alternative is considered to be the most viable.



Cattedown Wharves

One of the existing pleasure boat operators has suggested that pre-booked leisure cruises could start from Laira/Cattedown as an alternative to the Barbican where coach access is more restricted. Passengers would be dropped off at a coach parking area adjacent to the Park & Sail

site and transferred to the landing stage, just south of Laira Bridge, by road train. Unless they were exclusive charters they could also call in at the Barbican to 'top up'. The Mount Batten Water Taxi, or indeed any other boat operator, could provide a linking service to the Barbican for other visitors.

Breakwater Road

The Breakwater Road area was originally investigated as a potential Park and Ride or Park and Sail site, particularly for commuters. It is no longer in any forward plan as it was considered to be too difficult to access and too close to the city centre. However, as yet no alternative site to the east of the Plym has been identified and it is suggested that the City Council may wish to reconsider this area, if only as a Park & Sail site aimed at visitors should the Embankment/Laira site prove unviable.

There appear to be two possibilities. The first is to use the redundant Pomphlett Jetty, suitably modified, together with the parking areas associated with that area. The advantage would be that most of the infrastructure exists. Alternatively, what appears to be a redundant concrete reservoir at the very southwestern corner of the Breakwater Works site could be used for parking. It extends to approximately 8,000 square metres. The corner of this lies approximately 35m. from the waterfront, through the Oreston Dinghy Park. A new pontoon at this location would have a dual-use in serving the local Oreston residents.

7.3 Summary

Of the two sites considered, the Embankment / Laira site appears to have most potential. The current urban design and transportation study of the Eastern Gateway to Plymouth will provide an opportunity for this site to be considered in a wider context.

From a water transport perspective, the creation of a park and sail site could be one of the most effective ways of increasing use by visitors.

The concept of providing an alternative location for coach drop off facilities is supported in principle by one of the harbour cruise operators.

8.0 PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

8.1 Landing Facilities - Design Parameters

The configuration and design of landing facilities will by necessity vary to suit local conditions such as location (exposed coastal or sheltered estuarial waters), tidal range, nature of the foreshore (beach, vertical seawall etc.) and the type of vessel likely to use the facility.

However, in order to achieve the long-term objective of creating an integrated water transport system within the study area there needs to be an aspiration to meet minimum prescribed standards at all locations. The Employer's Requirements for the Mount Batten Landing Stage were based on research of facilities in the UK and a review of vessels operating in the Sound at the time and those likely to be introduced in the future. The intention was to set a new standard for such facilities in Plymouth Sound and Estuaries.

Lower Pier, Millbrook Lake- Whilst passengers in the 1890's might have been prepared to walk the plank, such precarious activities are no longer acceptable.

Ideally therefore, new facilities should have similar design parameters to those adopted for the landing stage at Mount Batten i.e.:

- Full disabled access at all states of the tide (limiting gradient of 1:12 on the access walkway and pontoon).
- A varying freeboard along the berthing edge of the pontoon suitable for a wide range of vessels.
- Sufficient depth of water at Lowest Astronomic tide to permit access by ferry vessels working in the Sound (approximately 1.5m).



Mount Batten Landing Stage

The requirement for provision to be made for disabled passengers has a significant bearing on the design of facilities given the tidal range in the study area. To meet the limiting gradient long walkways in conjunction with ramps on the pontoon area required which add to the overall cost.

	Plymouth to Cargreen	Calstock
Mean Spring Tide	0.8m-5.5m	0.4m-4.6m
Mean Neap Tide	2.2m-4.4m	1.4m-3.5m

Construction of a facility similar to the landing stage at Mount Batten would be likely to cost in the region of £650,000. It has to be considered unlikely therefore that the local authorities will be funding a network of these but will rely on their introduction in association with developments. To this cost will be added the cost of purchase or lease of the land above and below water occupied by the structure and its landside facilities.

In some circumstances the provision of a facility with full disabled access may not be practicable due to space constraints or an historical setting for example or, given the significant cost of such a facility, not economically viable because there may only be limited demand for services. In this case it may be appropriate to provide a facility with full disabled to serve a section of the waterfront, with the limiting gradient specification relaxed for other landing facilities in the vicinity allowing the use of a smaller pontoon and shorter walkway. This approach would need to be considered with the City Council Access Officer in the context of the Disability Discrimination Act. Formal dispensation may need to be obtained.

A further alternative that could be cost effective would be the use of ‘landing craft’ style vessels with hydraulically operated bow doors, similar to the vessels operated on the Padstow to Rock ferry service. These can operate from sloping slipways with a degree of accessibility for disabled passengers. Such an arrangement is not considered appropriate for use throughout the Sound and Estuaries but could be suitable for specific services, for example on the Upper Tamar.



The Landing Stage at Calstock

Within sheltered estuarial waters, smaller facilities, such as the one at Calstock, would be appropriate. This facility, which cost less than £100,000, allows disabled access at times when the larger ferries suitable for carrying disabled passengers can berth.

In terms of shore facilities, landing stages should ideally be provided with enclosed / covered waiting areas and public toilets nearby. The City Council has commenced the process of providing ‘real time’ passenger information at bus shelters within the Plymouth Travel to Work Area. Initially the system will be introduced on the low-floor bus routes, primarily along the northern corridor. As more low-floor buses are commissioned the area covered can expand (assuming the finance is available) and would provide a useful service at bus/ferry interchange shelters.

It should not be forgotten that there will be an on-going maintenance liability which the local authorities may have difficulty in meeting given their existing commitments for the multitude of public access points. Therefore the developers should be obliged to deposit commuted funds to meet this liability.

8.2 Landing Facilities – Specific Improvements

The preceding sections of the report have identified potential improvements to existing services and new services that could be viable in the future. In order for the demand for services to be realised a number of factors will need to be addressed including improvements to landing facilities. The improvements necessary at locations where the potential for new and enhanced services has been identified are described. Where all new facilities are required these should be designed in accordance with the parameters defined above. The costs of new facilities are difficult to determine at this stage as design solutions are not yet developed. However, the costs quoted in the preceding section for the recently completed facilities can be used as a guide.

Millbay

A landing facility should have a close interchange with the bus service and this suggests it should be close to Millbay Road. The final location will need to be determined in the context of the development plan for the area.

The potential exists for a car/coach pleasure cruise interchange at Millbay Docks. However it is assumed that the development value and Local Plan designation of the site would rule out a major provision of parking.

Stonehouse

A replacement for Admirals Hard is required because the existing slipway is unsatisfactory; it is unsafe in darkness, unpleasant to use and has insufficient height at high tide. In addition, if the aspirations of Mount Edgecumbe Country Park are to be realised there would be a facility with disabled access at Cremyll that would need to be matched by a similar facility at Stonehouse.

There are a number of possible alternative locations between Admirals Hard and Royal William Square where a pontoon could be provided with access to Cremyll Street. A pontoon at these locations could serve both the Cremyll Ferry and future services bringing visitors to Royal William Yard.

A suitable location would appear to be in front of the west or south facing seawalls adjacent to the Strand Street Overflow Car Park. This site would be close to the existing landing point, close to the car park and bus route and within a short walking distance of Royal William Yard. The project would need to include dredging to allow vessel access at all states of the tide and adjustments to the boat mooring arrangements in Stonehouse Pool. Consent would be required for the dredging work. As the Tamar Estuary is designated as a Special Area of Conservation under The Habitats Directive, consent for dredging may not be forthcoming. Early consultation with the Marine Consents Unit and the Environment Agency would be advisable to gauge their views in advance of the preparation of design solutions. The removal of the existing Admirals Hard Slipway and the reinstatement of the bed may be an acceptable compensation measure.

Royal William Yard

If a new landing facility is to be provided at Royal William Yard then the most suitable location would appear to be inside the harbour basin although this would mean that the Swing Bridge would need to be kept in an open position. The installation of a facility outside the basin would have a significant visual impact on the listed structures. The connection between the walkway and the harbour wall would need to be designed to minimise disruption to the wall structure and to allow removal (in the long term) in order to satisfy English Heritage. Clearly close co-ordination with English Heritage would be required during planning and design.

Devonport

A pragmatic approach to the provision of landing facilities on the Plymouth side of the Hamoaze would be to invest in a fully accessible facility at Stonehouse and upgraded facilities at North Corner and Mutton Cove, albeit with some limitations on access by the disabled. The facility at Stonehouse could be designed with vehicular access and disabled parking close by.

The present North Corner landing stage is not fully accessible to the disabled and would require significant investment to make it so. It is unlikely that the landing stage would attract sufficient use to justify the investment required.

The existing facility at Mutton Cove consists of steps on the side of the harbour. Careful design will be required to develop a new floating pontoon and walkway facility at this location, which is both accessible and adequately protected from exposure to the elements. A landing stage in front of the existing promontory would be exposed to a long fetch to the southwest and would need to be of robust design and construction. Berthing could also be difficult in the fast tidal stream. On the other hand, space at the entrance and inside Mutton Cove is restricted and the bed dries out at low tide. The construction of a small pontoon with a short walkway close to the entrance to the Cove may represent the most appropriate solution in keeping with the character of the area. This solution would only be viable if the approach to the provision of disabled outlined above is accepted.

The plans for the Naval Base Visitors Centre include the provision of a pontoon for access by waterborne visitors. Details for the facility have not yet been developed.

Upper Tamar

For some time to come it would seem that additional services in the Upper Tamar will be run on similar lines to the Tamar Passenger Ferry with small traditional ferry boats and simple landing facilities, which serve the need and add to the enjoyment of the experience.

The construction of new landing facilities on similar lines to the facility at Calstock, would allow passengers on the Barbican to Calstock including disabled passengers, to disembark. Such a facility would be appropriate at Cotehele, and possibly at other locations in the future. In the meantime, improvements at other locations in the Upper Tamar should be targeted at enhancing access for and the safe use of small ferry boats.

The alternative use of shallow draft 'landing craft' style vessels, which can pick up and drop off passengers from slipways, could open up improved accessibility to all members of the public at a large number of landing points. The opportunities for the use of this type of vessel should be explored with potential service operators.

Saltash

It is understood that the newly provided pontoon, north of the Tamar Bridge, has not been designed to accommodate the larger passenger ferries that currently operate in the Sound (the facility was design primarily for yachts and pleasure boats). Upgrading may therefore be required if a service is inaugurated using larger passenger ferries. There is a public car park close to the new facility.

The old pier, south of the Tamar Bridge, is being refurbished in association with the new (2003) service to be provided by Plymouth Boat Cruises (PBC) from Phoenix Wharf. Dredging as necessary will be carried out. PBC envisage the possibility of acquiring a new vessel having front ramps suitable for the disabled and being able to use the old chain ferry slipway rather than the pier. The provision of a taxi rank is being progressed to create a transport link to the new ferry service.

Cremyll

A rise and fall pontoon is required to provide a facility accessible to the disabled. The sea wall either side of the jetty regularly suffers damage through inundation/undermining in exceptional weather conditions. The least environmentally intrusive area for a pontoon would be between the jetty and Mashford's Boatyard. Mount Edgumbe Country Park has embarked on a study to identify a package of measures to improve accessibility and attractiveness. In general terms this will include a revision to landing arrangements and this study recommends that a fully accessible pontoon is provided complying with the defined design criteria. Capacity for more than one vessel to berth at a time would allow flexibility for the possible future introduction of links to Millbay, Mutton Cove, Royal William Yard and the Barbican.

The Hoe

The current landing arrangements are inadequate. While the proposed Phoenix Wharf facility is close by it is 'round the corner' and a new landing facility along the Hoe foreshore would be desirable for a linked water transport service for visitors. The earlier existence of the Pier suggests that such a pontoon would be viable. It would have to be sympathetically designed in order to complement and not compromise the outstanding setting of the area. This study recommends that such a facility should be considered.

In the current financial climate it is unrealistic to assume that the City Council alone would be able to provide funding. Objective 2 measure 3.3 '*Investing in the Tourism Infrastructure of Coastal Towns, Resorts and City Areas*' is heavily oversubscribed and closed for bids at this time (February 2003). There is likely to be a call for expressions of interest within the next few months. However the indications are that a landing facility may not be considered a high priority unless it can be shown to give sufficient added value to the programme area, to bring in extra visitors and to address seasonality.

Drakes Island

The Local Plan calls for a water transport link and the provision of landing facilities. Clearly both would be necessary for the development of this important heritage site.

Hooe Lake

The development brief in the Local Plan requires the provision of a new rise and fall pontoon in association with residential development. Dredging would be required for vessels to gain access to a landing facility close to Hooe Lake Point.

Oreston

It would appear feasible to provide a pontoon with access from the Oreston Waterfront. The most suitable location would appear to be at the northern end of the Waterfront close to the Plym Yacht Club. Some access dredging would be required together with adjustment to the small craft moorings.

This proposal would not relate to any development proposal and so would require Local Authority and / or grant funding. Were Park and Sail to be introduced at Breakwater Road then this service could make use of the same facility.

The Barbican

Plymouth City Council has prepared plans for a new ferry landing stage at Phoenix Wharf and implementation of the scheme is awaiting the completion of the funding arrangements. The scheme would provide a new pontoon, of similar configuration to the existing pontoon at Mount Batten, positioned 26 metres to the east of the end of Phoenix Wharf. The new pontoon would be linked to the existing wharf by an access bridge. Parts of the existing walkways and steps would be demolished to accommodate the new bridge.

The facility has been designed to receive passengers from cruise ships moored in the Sound. This would provide an alternative destination to Millbay and a more direct route for visitors wishing to see the Mayflower Steps and the Barbican. The proposed facility would also provide access to vessels for the disabled at all states of the tide, would improve overall safety for all passengers and would enhance the visitor experience for passengers.

However, whilst the proposed scheme at Phoenix Wharf has a number of merits, the new facility would not increase overall capacity and would not provide sufficient berthing space for all existing operators. Hence, the Mayflower Steps and water taxi landing stage would continue to be used for passenger boat operations. The potential for future extension of the new facility to provide additional berths would be constrained by the need to maintain access to the public slipways.

A more visionary approach would provide capacity for all current operators and services together with cruise liner tenders in the short term with designed-in potential for extension of the berthing area as the demand for new services develops. This approach would allow the

Barbican to develop as primary 'hub' for a water transport network in the Sound. Use of the Mayflower Steps could be discontinued and the water taxi landing stage could be decommissioned. The on-going maintenance liability of Phoenix Wharf could be reduced by the removal of the landing stages and steps. This would also improve its appearance.

The area in front of Commercial Wharf would appear most appropriate for this type of facility. Pontoons, installed in phases to suit demand, could be positioned in a north-south alignment to provide a number of berths without encroaching into the exclusion zone around the entrance to Sutton Harbour and without obstructing access to the public slipway. The berths could be served by a single access bridge from the shore. The development on the water could be integrated with commercial development on the shore to provide ticket offices, visitor information, covered waiting areas and retail / refreshment outlets. In summary, a new vision for a water transport 'hub' in the Barbican could significantly raise the profile of water transport in Plymouth Sound and the Estuaries and with it demand and viability.

The construction of the facility described above would displace the existing moorings in front of Commercial Wharf. Appropriate alternative facilities would need to be secured.

The City Council tried unsuccessfully to increase the size of the Lambhay Hill car park by adding further decks to improve the availability of car parking in the Barbican. This failed principally through objections from English Heritage due to its visual impact on The Citadel behind it. Since that time The Citadel itself has undergone a substantial enlargement, however it would seem unlikely that a new proposal to extend the car park would succeed. The Elphinstone car park / dinghy park has been taken over by the Sutton Harbour Company for re-development. It is a prime site and better suited to other uses.

There is no obvious solution to a direct car/coach – pleasure cruise interchange in the Barbican / Hoe area. The potential exists to convert the 21 on-street car parking on Madeira Road, between the Barbican and Lambhay Hill, to coach parking. This would assist the coaches but further disadvantage the car visitors. Such a change would require extensive consultation with the City Council Planning Department who previously insisted that car parking on this length took place on the 'land' side rather than the 'water' side of the road to minimise its visual impact from the east. In addition careful consultation would be required with the Barbican Traders Association who are concerned about the level of car parking in the area.

Sutton Harbour

The limited variation in water level within Sutton Harbour would allow the use of simple landing facilities for a water taxi service operating inside the lock gates.

8.3 Vessel Design

Existing Craft

The majority of vessels currently providing water transport services within the study area are relatively old. Several vessels on the Tamar are over 40 years old. Their replacements should be designed to integrate with future needs and services.

The view is held that the pleasure cruise market would benefit as an attraction in its own right if it presented the customer either with smartly presented new vessels or clearly 'period' vessels. Without significant investment it may be difficult for current proprietors to replace their ageing fleets to meet these requirements. This strengthens the finding that through better marketing of their cruises they could capitalise on the potential that exists and hence be better placed to afford new craft.

Design Parameters

New vessels should ideally comply with the following design parameters, as appropriate for the particular service(s) on which they will be used:

- Have covered accommodation with the option to remain on deck.
- Offer a comfortable environment.
- Have ease of access at all states of the tide for persons of all levels of mobility from existing and purpose built landing stages.
- Have minimum boarding/alighting times.
- Have sufficient capacity.
- Have minimum running costs.
- Be easy to maintain.
- Be usable in all weathers.
- Be manoeuvrable.
- Have low draft.
- Be pollution free.
- Be sustainably constructed.
- Have storage for pedal cycles.
- Be equipped with navigation equipment to remain operational in fog.

Depending on the length of journey the vessel could be provided with toilets and refreshment facilities.

It has been suggested that with an automatic docking system (purpose-designed craft and landing stages) the vessel could be operated by one person. This would have a significant effect on operating costs, however a satisfactory means of ticket issue and validation would be required.

The technology and design is available to produce a low wash vessel to minimise the effects of wake at speed. However, The Queens Harbour Master remains of the view that on the grounds of safety (i.e. reducing the risk of collision) the current speed limits (10 knots in the majority of the study area) are appropriate. Hence, fast vessels such as the vessel recently introduced in the Scilly Isles, will not be beneficial in the Sound and Estuaries.

The landing craft style of vessel, such as the vessel used on the Padstow to Rock Ferry Service, can land at conventional slipways and offer accessibility for disabled passengers. The vessel is unlikely to be suitable for use in the Sound and Hamoaze due to the exposed conditions and the length of trip. The vessel may be appropriate in the more sheltered Upper Reaches of the Tamar where there are a number of slipways.

Vessels are expensive to obtain and maintain. To provide a reliable service, backup should always be available to cover unexpected breakdown and planned refits. Alternatively the vessels themselves should have dual operating systems and easily replaced components. The would suggest that the current single mid-engine propulsion unit should be replaced by twin outboard propulsion units, with the craft being able to operate on one engine and the engines chosen for ease of repair or replacement. To minimise pollution outboard engines should be 4-stroke and not 2-stroke.

Water jet propulsion should be considered, such as utilised in the 'River Runners' made in Darwin by NQA. Examples of these are in use on the Thames, Belfast Lough and in Amsterdam.

The most expensive scenario would be for a number of ferry companies to be running on different routes using existing style propulsion system craft. Unless the companies unite in a fairly loose arrangement to fund a standby craft usable by all they will all need a backup vessel.

A single ferry company running all routes would require a minimum number of backup craft and the company could more readily co-ordinate refit dates etc.

There are boatyards in the local area capable of constructing vessels suitable for use in the Sound and its Estuaries. A company based in Cawsand is developing environmentally friendly craft, taking into consideration 'whole-life' costs as well as running costs and propulsion systems. At present their capacity is limited to 12 passengers.

Disabled Access

It is national and local policy to cater for the less mobile in society. Chapter 50 section 19 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 states:

- (1) It is unlawful for a provider of services to discriminate against a disabled person in refusing to provide, or deliberately not providing to the disabled person any service which he provides, or is prepared to provide to members of the public;
- (5) Except in such circumstances as may be prescribed, this section and section 20 and 21 do not apply toany service so far as it consists of the use of any means of transport.

This would indicate that whilst it may be policy to, and undoubtedly desirable to, procure and use a fully accessible vessel there is no legal requirement. An extension to the services in the Upper Tamar can therefore take place without the need to cater fully for disabled people, although the objective should be to make provision as far as is reasonably practical.

8.4 Environmental Impact

Plymouth Sound and its Estuaries constitute one of the finest extensive ria systems in Britain (a river valley that flooded due to rising sea level after the last great ice age). It is particularly significant in terms of marine wildlife due to its southerly location and diversity of habitats, which are extremely rich in flora and fauna.

In recognition of its significance, the area encompassing both the Tamar and Plym Estuaries has been designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994 (the “Habitats Regulations”). This is a European Designation assigned to the most valuable habitats in Europe. The Habitats Regulations therefore apply to any development in these areas.

In addition to the Habitats Regulations, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations will also apply to any development proposals.

For projects involving construction in the marine environment applications for consents/licenses under the Food and Environment Protection Act and the Coastal Protection Act will need to be made through the Marine Consents Unit (a joint unit set up by DEFRA and DLR to administer the application process). It is almost certain that an environmental impact assessment will be required for each project.

The Marine Consents Unit, through consultation with a wide range of statutory consultees, will assess the impact of the development proposals on the integrity of the SAC. If, following an appropriate assessment, it is deemed that there would be an adverse affect then consent cannot be given unless there is no less damaging alternative and an imperative reason of overriding public interest. Mitigation measures (which maintain the integrity of the site) and compensation measures (which address the residual impacts) can be proposed to offset the potential adverse impact so that consent can be secured.

In practice, great care will need to be taken in the design of new and improved facilities to avoid significant impact on the environment. In particular, the requirement for dredging or land reclamation will need to avoided where possible or compensation measures may need to be considered to address the residual impact on the SAC.

New vessels should ideally be designed and procured to be ‘whole life’ environmentally sustainable. Their propulsion systems should cause minimum pollution (including noise) and the detrimental effect of wash on the riverbanks should be avoided.

Any vessel used in a ferry mode should be capable of carrying pedal cycles at reasonable cost and the terminals of both ferry and leisure services should be provided with secure cycle parking facilities. Integrated links should also be provided with other modes of public transport.

9.0 MARKETING INITIATIVES

9.1 Introduction

The profile of tourism in Plymouth is significantly different to the surrounding districts and to many other parts of the South West. In terms of visitors staying in the City, there are more visits to friends and relatives, more business trips and more short breaks. Accordingly, the commercial accommodation stock is geared to these markets, with more serviced accommodation and less self-catering accommodation. While all population centres will generate trips to friends and relatives, the MoD personnel from all over the country stationed in Plymouth have an above-average propensity to generate such trips.

Plymouth fulfils a major role as a day visit destination, both for residents of the South West but also for visitors staying in holiday accommodation elsewhere in the South West, particularly South Hams, Torbay and Caradon. The profile of trips to these surrounding areas is markedly different to Plymouth, with a greater proportion of longer holidays and more use of self-catering accommodation, combined with fewer business and visits to friends and relatives. It is therefore likely that many of the potential users of a water transportation system for Plymouth will be from outside the City, and marketing any such service will have to consider the geographical issues and the profile of trips.

9.2 Current Marketing Activities

Plymouth

Plymouth Marketing Bureau markets the City, targeting five segments:

- Conference Organisers
- City Breaks
- Travel Trade
- Day Visitor
- Overseas Visitors

Between 60,000 to 80,000 guides are printed annually, with the overall quantity geared to available finance and distribution mechanisms. The City Break market is addressed through destination marketing in a variety of media plus co-operative work with a range of partners (e.g. South West Tourism, Great British Cities etc.). Overseas visitors are accessed via the Devon and Cornwall Overseas Marketing consortium. Plymouth Marketing Bureau also operates a website, providing motivational material as well as attractions, events and places to visit. Tourist Information Centres are located at the Barbican and at Marsh Mills. Although there is no current tourism strategy for Plymouth, the Tourism Development Group and the current Best Value exercise are tackling issues incrementally by:

- Identification and pursuit of core markets (see above)
- Work on niche markets (e.g. cruise ships, through Destination South West)
- Work in a joined up way to address the local day visitor market (currently outside the Plymouth Marketing Bureau remit)
- Increase the number and profile of events, and making better links between events with marketing

At a strategic marketing level, the drivers for growth in the long term are continued focus on the Barbican/Coxside (with the National Marine Aquarium phase 2), along with the planned developments at Royal William Yard and South Yard.

South Hams

The main vehicles for the marketing of South Hams are the South Hams Holiday Guide and the www.somewhere-special.co.uk website. Environmental and other sustainability issues feature strongly in the destination marketing, along with opportunities to undertake walking and cycling, linked to use of public transport and exploration of villages. South Hams District Council produce the 'Out and About in the South Hams' annual leaflet (c. 30,000 per annum), which provides guidance on visitor use of the area using boats, trains, bus, bikes and on foot, as well as motivations for doing so. Importantly, the information explains how the different transport systems work together. The District Draft Recreation and Access Strategy 2000-2005 sets out how the leaflet is reinforced by joint bus-ferry discounted tickets and wide spread access to information.

The round robin joint-ticketed trip through the South Devon Steam Railway, Red Cruisers Ferries and bus/coach companies demonstrates how private services can be networked to form an attractive visitor offer using different types of transport.

Caradon

The South East Cornwall Looe & Polperro Holiday Guide 2002 and Accommodation Register 2002 are used to market South East Cornwall to domestic visitors, and the district works through the Devon and Cornwall Overseas Marketing Consortium to attract visitors from overseas. The www.southeastcornwall.co.uk website is also used to provide visitor information and includes some information on the Tamar Valley and on walking and cycling opportunities in the district.

West Devon

The West Devon tourism strategy is focussed on developing sustainable tourism policies to preserve and improve the countryside and to reflect local heritage. Priorities include:

- Encouraging more short breaks through working with other Devon Districts
- Encouraging more business tourism through the Conference Devon partnership
- Working through the Devon and Cornwall Overseas Marketing Consortium to attract visitors from overseas

Tamar Valley

The Tamar Valley Tourism Association is developing a programme of marketing for the Tamar Valley, using PR work and a website, along with the development of a number of marketing co-operatives. The main markets identified for the Tamar Valley are adults on second holidays seeking walking, arts and craft, heritage, National Trust properties etc., although there is some interest by families. The day visit market from Plymouth is also identified as having more potential.

Other initiatives include a programme of events and local sourcing programmes. Provision of information is seen a priority in encouraging visitors to spend more time in the Tamar Valley e.g. packs of information on days out without the car are provided in holiday accommodation to persuade people to stay in the area. The river and the opportunities offered by the rail and river transportation are also seen as key to the Valley's offer to visitors.

The Tamar Valley railway line is marketed through the Days Out to the Tamar Valley and Dartmoor leaflet, which provides details on using water transport in conjunction with trains. It also forms one of the lines in the Great Scenic Railways leaflet.

Boat Operators

Tamar Cruising produce their own leaflets and have a web site on www.tamarcruising.co.uk.

Plymouth Boat Cruises have raised their production of leaflets from 35,000 in 2002 to 75,000 in 2003 in association with the new service between Plymouth and Saltash. Their web pages are accessed from the Westcountry Links site – www.westcountrylinks.co.uk/pbc and through the Tamar Valley Tourism site, www.tamarvalleytourism.co.uk.

Mount Batten Water Taxi has its own web site on www.mbwt.co.uk.

9.3 Future Marketing Initiatives

The indications are that the new formal and informal development opportunities will generate the potential for substantial increases in visitor numbers using water transport. For these numbers to be realised there will need to be some combination of:

- Increased waterfront usage by Plymouth residents
- More day trips by residents of surrounding districts
- Increased numbers of holiday short breaks to Plymouth
- A greater level of interest in the waterfront leisure opportunities by people taking trips to visit friends and relatives in Plymouth
- Greater interest in Plymouth by those staying on holiday in surrounding districts, particularly in the light of recent falls in the number of visitor nights in Torbay, which supplies a significant proportion of the day trips from holiday accommodation
- Improved seasonal spread of water transport usage

There will need to be particular policies and marketing efforts to generate these changes, by both the public and private sector across East Cornwall and South and West Devon. It is apparent that some of the changes are already underway (e.g. the Plymouth Marketing Bureau's attention to the day visits from the City). While there will be marketing initiatives necessary to exploit the opportunities presented by some of the future regeneration schemes (e.g. Royal William Yard etc.), there are a number of current opportunities such as:

- Promotion of short break packages combining accommodation, water transport, attractions etc.
- Promotion of round trip packages using water transport in conjunction with other non-car transport (bus/rail/cycle/walking). This would need to include properly integrated timetables
- Marketing activity orientated towards greater use of water transport by Plymouth residents. This will need to build the appeal of using Mount Edgecumbe, the Tamar Valley and, to a lesser extent, Mount Batten. In this context, water transportation is part of the attraction of the trip rather than merely the means of accessing locations around the Sound and estuaries. This will require action primarily by Plymouth City Council
- The opportunity to use the events programme (see earlier sections) to further build use of water transportation. This would require the active involvement of any federation of water transport operators as well as Plymouth City Council, working in partnership with any separate events organisers (such as the Royal Navy for Navy Days). As well as the programme in the Sound, the events programme in the Tamar Valley can be further developed
- Building use of the services to and around the Tamar Valley. This could include partnership working between Plymouth City Council, Caradon District Council, West Devon Borough Council, Wessex Trains, Tamar Valley AONB, Tamar Valley Tourist Association and the boat operators.
- Building the use of services to Mount Edgecumbe and to Mount Batten through more marketing.
- Co-ordinated information and marketing about existing water transportation/cruises. This would require co-operative working by the water transport operators. The consultation process has identified tourism operator enthusiasm for joint ticketing across attractions and transportation operators. The introduction of any such scheme would be facilitated by any federation of water transport operators, along with in kind support from organisations such as Plymouth Marketing Bureau to get the scheme off the ground, and some limited supporting budget for printing and promotion of the scheme. This sort of scheme could take the form of a 'visitor passport' that allows travel and entry to different attractions over a period of time
- Familiarisation trips for TIC staff, attraction operators and accommodation operators in the catchment area

Work undertaken elsewhere (e.g. South Hams) shows the importance of marketing visitor and leisure orientated transport in an integrated manner, tied in with reasons to make the trip. In fact, the South Hams District Council '*Out and About in the South Hams*' annual leaflet would be a good model for the Tamar Estuaries Area to adopt, particularly if some of the other elements such as the Plymouth Waterfront Walkway were included. Such a leaflet would cover all local authority areas surrounding the Estuaries and a partnership of these may

share funding. In addition operators such as Wessex Trains may contribute, particularly if they felt that leaflets would be well targeted. An allowance of £6,000-£8,000 should cover about 50,000 A2 folded to A5 leaflets.

The web also offers potential and around £3,000-£5,000 would build an attractive stand-alone website. However there may be benefits from housing the site within one of the authority websites to ensure that it is maintained. This site should be linked to all other relevant websites.

9.4 Summary

There are a number of initiatives that can take place in the short term to increase use of water transportation in Plymouth Sound and estuaries.

The suggested methods would include PR work (particularly amongst Plymouth and surrounding district residents), briefing of TIC staff, attraction operators and accommodation providers (including familiarisation trips), development of Internet information and promotion with appropriate links, inclusion in existing visitor guides and publication of leaflets. Importantly, initiatives will need to consider public sector cross-border working in order to maintain a visitor market focus, and will in many cases require a co-ordinated response from the private sector.

The issue of marketing extends beyond the promotion of the water transport services. It should also look to use the opportunities provided by the attractiveness of water transportation to market the city and surrounding districts.

10.0 FUNDING STREAMS, POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS, OUTCOMES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 Funding Streams

The key potential funders for Plymouth water transportation initiatives include:

- Plymouth City Council
- South West of England Regional Development Agency
- Objective Two Programme
- Objective One Programme

Other potential funders include:

- Devon County Council
- Caradon District Council
- West Devon Borough Council
- Countryside Agency

Plymouth City Council has a strong interest in water transportation in the Sound and estuaries. There are opportunities for the City Council to provide in kind support through increased PR work and through a continued waterside emphasis of current events work. There are also opportunities for the City Council to provide in kind support through taking a lead role in encouraging the formation of a Federation of Water Transport Operators.

The South West of England Regional Development Agency (RDA) has categorised Plymouth as a priority city and is already committed to a number of major regeneration schemes around the waterfront. Discussions indicate that the RDA already recognises the value of a water transportation system in Plymouth and is supporting the development of the new Phoenix Wharf facilities (in partnership with Plymouth City Council and English Partnerships).

The RDA has also indicated that it may be able to extend support to other infrastructure development, such as facilities at the Hoe, provided that any such development is part of a comprehensive plan with links to the other schemes such as Millbay, the Barbican and Royal William Yard, and that the rest of the funding package can be assembled.

The key recommendations for the RDA are that explicit consideration and adequate funding are built into the waterfront regeneration schemes to allow the development of water transportation facilities. This will include consideration of enhanced public access along the waterfront, landing facilities, transport interchanges and inclusion of leisure elements in the regeneration schemes.

The Objective Two Programme Measures 3.3 (Investing in tourism infrastructure of coastal towns, resorts and city areas) and 3.4 (Promotion and development of the regional distinctiveness of the area) are relevant to water transportation in Plymouth.

- Measure 3.3 aims to increase tourism expenditure in coastal towns, resorts and city areas through the provision of quality new and improved attractions, visitor facilities and related infrastructure. However, the measure is heavily oversubscribed and currently closed for bids. It is likely that there will be a call for expressions of interest to be assessed by the Priority Management Group and it is therefore recommended that consideration is given to which of the potential infrastructure developments should be put forward. Initial indications are that there would have to be a strong case made for the potential pontoon at the Hoe in order to address concerns about increasing peak season use and about not bringing additional visitors.
- Measure 3.4 aims to increase the competitiveness of tourism businesses, identify and target new markets to increase the number of both UK and overseas visitors to the South West Objective 2 area at a rate above the national average. However, this measure is even more oversubscribed and may not open up for bids this year. Should any opportunities open up under this measure, any bid would need to be targeted towards off-peak season activity.

There clearly needs to be a dialogue with Government Office in order to ensure that markers are put down for specific project proposals and that the priority management group for Objective 2 is aware of the potential.

The Objective One Programme Measures 2.4 (Strategic Regional Infrastructure) and 5.2 (Enhancing and Developing the Public Product) are relevant to water transportation in Cornwall.

- Measure 2.4 aims to remove infrastructure barriers that act as a constraint to the realisation of the full beneficial impact of projects and plans. This includes improvements to harbour and port facilities related to the needs of Cornish businesses.
- Measure 5.2 aims to maintain and increase the economic benefits derived from the coastal and inland heritage, the buildings and structures of historic value and the natural environment with emphasis on access for visitor and resident alike. Activities may include restoration of existing slips/access points/quays/piers/harbour walls of the smaller harbours and coves.

Projects spanning the two programme areas can seek funding from both.

The Countryside Agency operates the Rural Transport Partnership Grant and the smaller scale Parish Transport Grant schemes. The schemes support community-based transport initiatives which secure a long term improvement in rural people's access to jobs, services and social activities, and which enhance visitors' access to the countryside. A wide range of schemes, both motorised and non-motorised are eligible. Up to £250,000 can be applied for each eligible project. The opportunities under this programme should be explored for the rural parts of the study area.

Other sources of funding might include the Distributive Environmental Bodies (DEB's) administering Landfill Tax Credit funds. Different DEB's will have different priorities and criteria and there are a number of these bodies covering Devon and Cornwall,

The Local Transport Plans (LTP's), prepared by Cornwall County Council, Devon County Council and Plymouth City Council, set out policies and targets for sustainable integrated transport. The LTP process gives an indication of forward allocation of finance in fairly broad bands of expenditure and is shortly due for revision. It is considered that where a water transport facility is used, at least in part, by commuters or assists in managing demand, such as Park and Sail, a bid for assistance with funding within the LTP process would be appropriate.

10.2 Potential Partnerships

A Steering Group will be needed to ensure that the proposals are undertaken in a comprehensive manner. The Group must cover all the organisations with a relevant interest in the project. Organisations that could be included are:

- Plymouth City Council
- Plymouth Marketing Bureau
- SW RDA
- Water transport operators
- Maritime Plymouth
- Plymouth Chamber of Commerce
- Government Office South West
- Caradon District Council
- West Devon Borough Council
- South Hams District Council
- Tamar Valley Countryside Service
- Countryside Agency
- Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership
- Wessex Trains
- Bus operators
- Tamar Valley Tourist Association
- Queen's Harbour Master
- Destination South West

Once individual projects start to come forward for implementation, they will become the responsibility of the owner / developer, funding organisations and water-transport operators.

The formation of a Federation of Water Transport Operators would provide a representative voice for the private sector that could work with, and be represented on, the Steering Group.

10.3 Employment and Training Opportunities

Employment

Current water transportation operators are:

- Tamar Cruising
- Plymouth Boat Cruises
- Cawsand Ferry
- Silverline
- Mount Batten Ferry
- Tamar Passenger Ferry
- Devon Belle II

Employment across these operators (assessed through interview and two estimates) is 54.5 Full Time Equivalent jobs (FTE's) in the summer, falling to 27.5 FTE's in the winter. This employment is spread across 13 boats (giving an average of four FTE's directly employed per vessel), although some operators have alternative boats rather than the ability to crew their whole fleet at one time within their current workforce. Note some employment will be support staff as well as crew.

The analysis earlier in the report indicates that there are significant short term opportunities and substantial longer term opportunities. Discussions indicate that the short term opportunities are likely to increase the utilisation of existing craft and bring forward plans to invest in new vessels. It is likely that the increased utilisation will add to employment and if the marketing initiatives discussed above are able to improve the seasonal spread of visitors, then a greater proportion of the employment will be year-round.

Short to medium term employment targets could include a 10% increase in peak season FTE's (another 5 FTE's, the equivalent to just over one more vessel in operation) and a 20% increase in off peak employment (11 FTE's, the equivalent to just under three more vessels in operation). It is considered that given the opportunities offered, these targets should be achievable with adequate marketing and other support.

Longer term employment targets could be substantially greater, although very difficult to assess at this stage.

In addition to the increased employment in the water transport operators themselves, there are likely substantial wider benefits. Discussion earlier in this report has highlighted the links between water transportation and the range of other leisure opportunities in the study area. Water transport will help to secure the viability of tourist attractions and other visitor-facing businesses through raising the profile of the waterfront and tangibly delivering customers. Even at an early stage, a firm stated public commitment to water transport can be used in attraction and other visitor facing facility business planning.

On a wider level, the presentation of water transport has the potential to be a key factor in the development of Plymouth and the surrounding districts as visitor destinations. If it is able to play such a role, then the employment supported will be very substantial.

Training

The key training issues will be across the following areas:

- Maritime competence/safety
- Customer care
- Business management

At a basic level it is critical that any services are operated to the highest safety standards, and that where possible these should look to likely future safety requirements as well as current obligations. In addition to any losses directly related to an incident, there are issues relating to impacts on the usage of the whole set of services. There is a clear need to ensure that there is adequate provision of training for operators in this respect, and that lack of such expertise does not constrain growth in the sector.

Visitors have increasing expectations about the quality of service in their accommodation and attractions and will apply those standards to water transportation services. In addition to the warmth of welcome on the vessel itself, customer care will include pre-visit standards of information, bookability etc. as well as any aftercare and the way that the waterborne experience relates to other parts of their trip (e.g. parking, catering etc.). It is recommended that the water transport operators are part of the wider tourist industry network in this respect, with participation in courses such as Welcome Host and, in conjunction with other land-based tourism operators, development of specific training courses to meet other needs. As part of the training programme to improve the services provided to visitors, consideration should be given on training staff about the history and significance of the area and its attractions. Participation in such courses should be actively used by water transport operators to demonstrate their visitor focus.

In the same way that other small businesses will typically benefit from business advice, it is recommended that water transport operators are actively targeted for business management advice. This should improve viability of services for a given level of demand, which could be crucial during the early development stage of services. Effective forms of support include schemes such as business mentors and peer group networks (to include other locations as well as Plymouth Sound and estuaries).

There is a clear role for a coordinated approach by a partnership of agencies to include Enterprise Plymouth and formal education providers in the City. Other parts of the tourism industry have identified confusion about the range and benefits of training courses, as well as the issues that small businesses face in the time to send key personnel on training courses, and it is likely that similar issues will apply to water transport operators.

10.4 Maintenance Responsibilities and Arrangements for Landing Fees

The responsibility for maintenance of landing facilities should rest with the Local authority in the case of public landing facilities and private owners in the case of private landing facilities.

A proportion of the landing fees paid by boat operators should be aside to cover routine maintenance and future repair and upgrade. This has not happened in the past and as a consequence a significant un-funded backlog of repair work has developed.

10.5 Summary

Plymouth is a priority area for regeneration, and therefore there are some funding opportunities available. However funding issues include:

- Over-subscription for some of the funding opportunities
- A clear need to present an integrated approach across a range of projects

Continued development of the water transportation opportunities in the study area will require a steering group drawn from a cross section of agencies. This group will identify opportunities and work with the key parties in order to ensure that projects are viable, meet funders' requirements and fit within the wider regeneration of the study area.

The development of water transportation offers opportunities to increase employment in the sector directly, as well as substantial wider potential employment impacts.

The study has identified training opportunities across maritime competence/safety, customer care and business management.

There is a need to ensure that revenue from use of water transport facilities is re-invested.

11.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Conclusions

The waterfront is Plymouth's USP. The City has many problems – deprivation, unemployment, areas of dereliction – but it is located in one of the most spectacular settings in the country. There are many plans to regenerate the City and in particular the waterfront areas, but in order to make these plans happen, Plymouth's profile needs to be raised and investors, occupiers, residents need to be convinced that Plymouth can be transformed. An attractive, good quality water-transport system would provide a significant contribution to that transformation, by changing the emphasis of the City towards the waterfront and making much greater use of areas of the City with a high international recognition factor such as the Hoe. It would also provide much needed sustainable access solutions to major regeneration sites such as the Royal William Yard.

It is difficult to provide accurate predictions about the future levels of demand, when so much of the waterfront area is still the subject of studies to determine their future. What is clear is that Plymouth needs to make much more of its waterfront and promote the waterfront and the qualities of the City in order to assist in the implementation of its ambitious regeneration proposals.

The study has found that there is potential for increased demand for water transport services in the study as a consequence of:

- The redevelopment of significant waterfront sites in Plymouth to create new or enlarged residential communities. Water transport would provide access to other parts of the Sound and Estuaries, predominantly for formal and informal recreation. The potential for access to employment will be limited.
- The creation of new formal visitor attractions on sites on or accessible from the waterfront. A proportion of their visitors could be encouraged to travel by water transport.
- Tourism trends which suggest an increase in the number of visitors to the Region.
- Widespread support for exploring non-car transport from national and local planning policies and guidance.
- A wider appreciation generally of the quality of life and importance of leisure time and an understanding and interest in the natural and historical environment.

Many of the more significant development projects are in their infancy and will take some time to come to fruition. For this reason, the development of a wider integrated water transport system should be seen as a medium to long term objective. However, in order to achieve this objective, it is important that plans are established now and that short term projects are progressed as part of a longer term strategy.

The review of the implications of the planned waterfront development and the potential demand from existing communities has led to the conclusion that the following services could be viable for residents travelling to other parts of the study area:

- ***A service linking Turnchapel, Hooe and Oreston with the Barbican.*** The introduction regular service from these locations would open up the opportunity to use water transport to a number of walking and cycling passengers.
- ***A service from Millbay to locations in the Western Sound and Hamoaze.*** There may be sufficient future demand for a seasonal/weekend service for residents. In the reverse direction Millbay would be a point of arrival for travel to the City Centre.
- ***A service from Mutton Cove and North Corner to Cremyll.*** Again there may be sufficient demand for a seasonal/weekend service for residents.
- ***A service on a circular route serving Millbay, Cremyll, Royal William Yard and Mutton Cove*** as an alternative to the previous two services.

As all of the above proposals are dependent upon the progress made on a number of development projects they constitute medium (5 to 10 years) or long term (>10 years) projects. However, there is an urgent need to plan for water-front infrastructure as early as possible as accessibility by water is likely to be a key tool in marketing and promoting the development opportunities on waterfront sites. The project at Mutton Cove could be brought forward as there is already an established community in the area.

The in depth appraisal of the tourism and recreation market including assessment of the impact of planned new attractions has led to the conclusion that the following services could be viable:

- ***The development of opportunities in the Tamar Valley.*** These would benefit from immediate attention, with latent demand realised through a programme of marketing, further ticket and service co- ordination, facilities development and packaging of travel and activities. Round-robin ticketing arrangements in the Tamar Valley would capitalise on walking opportunities.
- ***An enhanced service from the Barbican to the Upper Tamar.*** Short term, dependent upon demand.
- ***An improved link from the Barbican to Mount Edgecumbe.*** This is currently constrained by the limited berthing facilities at Cremyll. As plans to develop the landing facilities at Cremyll are in hand, this is a short to medium term project.
- ***Links from the Barbican to Millbay, Royal William Yard, the Devonport Flagship Project and the Naval Base Visitors Centre.*** This is a medium to long term prospect dependent upon the progress made on the development of the various visitor attractions.
- ***Services from and to a regenerated Hoe Foreshore.*** A medium to long term initiative dependent upon the regeneration of the Hoe foreshore.

- *Services from the proposed Centre of Marine Excellence at Coxside to various locations in the Sound and Tamar Estuary.* Details of the proposals are limited at present. There is the potential danger that the services could operate in competition with services from the Barbican adversely affecting the viability of the latter.
- *An occasional service linking Antony, Mount Edgecumbe and Cothele.*

Unfortunately, many of the potential new and enhanced services identified above will be most viable at weekends and during the summer season, particularly in the short term before services become well established. From an operational point of view this problematic due to the limited availability of vessels and the inefficiencies associated with crewing a vessel for only part of a week. This is an important factor that may discourage boat operators from introducing new services.

Whilst the study has identified several services that appear to have future potential, the development of water transport in Plymouth Sound and Estuaries as an attraction in its own right is seen as an issue of overriding importance. One of the study area's greatest assets is its water frontage and it is strongly believed that many visitors to the area will expect to have the opportunity to explore the area by boat. If greater numbers of visitors can be attracted onto the water, then the viability of a range of services will be enhanced. The quality of the landing facilities, the vessels, the availability of a range of routes and the quality of the marketing effort will all be important factors.

The introduction of Park and Sail at a location outside the city centre would allow visitors to travel to the city centre by boat and water transport tours to start at an accessible location with coach drop off and parking facilities. Easier access to water transport services could enhance its attractiveness to visitors and thereby increase demand. The benefits for the City would include a reduction in demand for city centre car parking and coach facilities and reduced congestion. Possible sites for a facility are now limited. Of the two sites considered by this study, the Embankment / Laira site appears to have most potential. The current urban design and transportation study of the Eastern Gateway to Plymouth will provide an opportunity for this site to be considered in a wider context. From a water transport perspective, the creation of a Park and Sail site could be one of the most effective ways of increasing water transport use by visitors.

11.2 Long Term Vision

If the conclusions outlined above are brought together and it is assumed that the planned development initiatives come to fruition, a long term vision for water transport in the study area could offer the following facilities and services:

- New state of the art landing facilities in the Barbican with:
 - Full accessibility for the disabled.
 - Capacity for a number of vessels to berth at the same time (including tenders from cruise ships)

- Shore facilities including toilets, service and visitor information, ticketing, real time passenger information.
 - Public transport connections.
 - A high quality, attractive and welcoming built environment.
 - Appropriate retail and food/beverage outlets.
- A range of services from the Barbican to:
- The Western Sound – a frequent circular water bus service, provided by more than one vessel, to the Hoe, Millbay, Cremyll, Royal William Yard, Devonport and Saltash.
 - The Plym – a water taxi service calling at Mount Batten and new landing facilities at Turnchapel, Oreston, Hooe and Coxside.
 - The Upper Tamar Valley as far as Calstock with intermediate stopping off points.
 - A Park and Sail location in the Cattewater.
 - Various harbour cruise, fishing and activity services.
- An enhanced service from Stonehouse to Cremyll with new facilities with full disabled access at both ends, possibly with a link to new landing facilities at Millbay.
- A new service linking North Corner, Mutton Cove and Cremyll. Landing facilities at Mutton Cove and North Corner would be improved but may not allow full disabled access.
- Ferry services operating in the Upper Tamar possibly as an extension of the Calstock Ferry, operating on a circular route linking points of demand. The service would be provided by simple open ferry boats. Landing stages would only be designed for disabled passengers if the larger vessels operating on the Barbican to Calstock route could berth.
- The use of modern vessels, with passenger capacities and facilities to suit the particular service.
- A co-ordinated marketing strategy aimed at promoting individual services and the concept of water transport as an attraction in its own right.

11.3 Short Term Action Plan

The Action Plan will to an extent depend upon the progress made on the various development initiatives within the study area. On the assumption that these are progressed broadly in line with current intentions the recommended actions in the short term are as follows:

Capital Projects

- **The construction of new landing facilities in the Barbican.** The current proposals for a new landing stage at Phoenix Wharf should be reviewed on the basis that the Barbican is at the 'hub' of a developing water transport network. Consideration should be given to providing a facility which accommodates *all* current services and incorporates *designed-in* potential for extension to accommodate new services as a key element of the overall vision for water transport in the Sound and Estuaries. The area in front of Commercial Wharf may be more appropriate for such a facility. Development on the water at this site could be integrated with development on the shore to provide ticket offices, visitor facilities including covered waiting areas and retail / refreshment outlets. The construction of the chosen scheme should be progressed as soon as funding, approvals and consents can be secured. Action Plymouth City Council.
- **The development of Park and Sail facilities and services.** This will require an urgent re-examination of the Laira site to assess its viability and acceptability as a visitor Park & Sail location. The examination should include the assessment of the feasibility of providing a link to a landing stage on the south side of the Laira Bridge. This work could be included within the scope of the current Eastern Gateway Study. If viable and acceptable the scheme should be implemented as soon as practicable. If not viable then the potential of the Breakwater Road site as an alternative location should be explored. Action Plymouth City Council.
- **The construction of new landing facilities for the Cremyll Ferry.** The proposals for the upgrade of the landing facilities at Cremyll should be reviewed to ensure that they include a rise and fall pontoon suitable for access by pedestrians of all levels of mobility and capacity for the berthing of more than one vessel at a time. On the Plymouth side a project to provide compatible new facilities in Stonehouse to replace Admirals Hard should be progressed. Action Mount Edgecumbe Joint Committee and Plymouth City Council.
- **The development of new landing facilities at Mutton Cove.** Alternative design schemes for the facility that address access issues, the exposed location and the space restrictions should be developed and used as a basis for consultation. Action Plymouth City Council.
- **Improvements to landing facilities on the Upper Tamar.** Projects should include the construction of a new facility at Cotehele along similar lines to the new landing stage at Calstock. Projects at other landing points should aim to improve access for vessels and safety for passengers. Action Tamar Valley Service.

Services and Transport Linkages

- **Joint Ticketing on the Tamar Corridor.** Investigation of the practicality of implementation joint ticketing of water transport, rail and bus services along the Tamar corridor. Action Tamar Valley Service.

- **Establishment of New Services to Mutton Cove.** Discussions should be initiated with operators with a view to establishing a seasonal / weekend service from Mutton Cove to Cremyll and from Mutton Cove to the Upper Tamar. Action Tamar Valley Service.

Planning

- **Securing provision for landing facilities as part of new developments.** Designs for landing facilities, associated shore facilities and transport linkages should be incorporated into the plans and designs being developed for Millbay, Royal William Yard, The Hoe, the Naval Base Visitors Museum and the Coxsides Centre for Marine Excellence. Action The SW Regional Development Agency and other promoters of new development.
- **Requiring private developers of waterside to include landings facilities within their developments.** The requirement for the construction of facilities should be accompanied by an obligation to maintain them without recourse to public funds. Action Plymouth City Council.

Management

- **The setting up of a Steering Group** drawn from a cross section of agencies ensure that proposals are undertaken in a comprehensive manner. The Group would identify specific funding opportunities and work with the key parties to ensure that projects are viable, meet funders' requirements and fit with the wider regeneration of the area. Action Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum to initiate the establishment of a Steering Group.
- **The establishment of a Federation of Water Transport Operators** be encouraged to create a representative body to work with the Steering Group in the implementation of the Action Plan. Action Tamar Estuaries Consultative to initiate the establishment of a Federation of Water Transport Operators.
- That the bid by West Country Rivers Trust, for funding for a project to tackle obstruction to navigation in the upper estuaries, be supported. Action all Councils.

Design

The following actions will apply to organisations involved in the procurement of new facilities or vessels.

- That landing stages should, where realistically achievable, incorporate:
- Full disabled access at all states of the tide (limiting gradient of 1:12 on the access walkway and pontoon).
- A varying freeboard along the berthing edge of the pontoon suitable for a wide range of vessels.

- Sufficient depth of water at Lowest Astronomic tide to permit access by ferry vessels working in the Sound (approximately 1.5m).
- Within sheltered estuarial waters smaller facilities should be provided along the lines of the new landing stage at Calstock which allows disabled access at times when the larger ferries suitable for carrying disabled passengers can berth. If the facility will only be used by small traditional ferry boats then simple facilities which are safe for passengers would be appropriate.
- That shelters and toilets should be provided in close proximity to landing facilities.
- That where there are, or potentially will be, bus interchanges at ferry landing stages provision should be made for a 'real time' passenger information system.
- That new vessels should be designed and procured to be 'whole life' environmentally sustainable. Their propulsion systems should cause minimum pollution (including noise) and the detrimental effect of wash on the riverbanks should be avoided.
- That any vessel used in a ferry mode should be capable of carrying pedal cycles at reasonable cost and the terminals of both ferry and leisure services should be provided with secure cycle parking facilities.

Funding

- **Funding co-ordination.** The Steering Group referred to under 'Management' above will need assist in the identification of specific funding opportunities for projects within the scope of the Action Plan and ensure that available funds are targeted in a co-ordinated way. The potential sources of funds have been identified in the report.
- **Local Transport Plan Review.** The opportunity should be taken, in the forthcoming review of the Local Transport Plan, to insert in the programme and make a bid for funding for new landing facilities where cater for non-leisure services. This would include Park and Sail Facilities and improvements to facilities at Cremyll and Stonehouse. Action Plymouth City Council.

Marketing

- **The Development of a co-ordinated marketing strategy.** A strategy should be developed that aims to capitalise on; increased waterfront usage by Plymouth residents, more day trips by residents of surrounding districts, increased numbers of holiday short breaks to Plymouth, increased visits to friends and relatives in Plymouth, greater interest in Plymouth by those staying on holiday in surrounding districts and improved seasonal spread of water transport usage. The strategy should take account of the need to market water transport as an attraction in its own right.

It is suggested that the Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum (and in due course the Steering Group) should take a lead role in co-ordinating the preparation of the strategy. Specific

actions, which should be implemented in conjunction with local authorities and the private sector including boat operators and other transport providers would include the following:

- **Co-ordinated information and marketing about existing water transportation/cruises.** The introduction of a joint ticketing scheme would be facilitated by a Federation of Water Transport Operators, along with in kind support from organisations such as Plymouth Marketing Bureau to get the scheme off the ground, and some limited supporting budget for printing and promotion of the scheme. This sort of scheme could take the form of a ‘visitor passport’ that allows travel and entry to different attractions over a period of time
- **The production of an annual leaflets** to promote water transport in the Sound and its Estuaries. The Cornwall County Council “*Car Free Days Out in South West Cornwall*” provides a good example of an integrated approach linking buses, trains, cycling and water transportation, as well as reasons to take trips. The South Hams District Council ‘*Out and About in the South Hams*’ annual leaflet shows the importance of marketing visitor and leisure orientated transport in an integrated manner, tied in with reasons to make the trip.
- **Ensuring coverage in exiting guides.** The introduction of a common reference and logo, for example ‘Visit by Boat!’, in conjunction with joint ticketing initiatives, could enhance visitor recognition and the attractiveness of water transport.
- **The development of a website** to promote water transport and its links to other sustainable forms of travel within the area surrounding the Sound and its Estuaries. This website to be linked to the Tourism and City, District and County Council websites and to include ferry timetables and links to ferry and leisure sites.
- **Public Relations work**, particularly amongst Plymouth residents, including briefing of Tourist Information Centre staff and the arrangement of familiarisation trips.

Training

- **Maritime Competence and Safety.** Operators to ensure that all staff have access to maritime operations and safety training. Action Water Transport Operators.
- **Customer Care.** Operators should be encouraged to arrange training for their staff in customer care through existing initiatives such as ‘Welcome Host’ or new courses developed to suit their needs. Action Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum to work with Operators, agencies such as Enterprise Plymouth and education providers.
- **Business Management.** Water transport operators should be targeted for business management advice to maximise service viability for a given level of demand. Action as above.

11.4 Medium to Long Term Action Plan

The action plan for the medium to long term will depend to a large extent upon the progress made on a number of key waterfront developments. Significant projects are likely to include:

- **The inauguration of a service to Hooe / Oreston** at a time when the proposed developments in the area have materialised. Public subsidy may be necessary in the early stages ensure that the service is financially viable. Action Plymouth City Council.
- **The promotion of a ‘hail and ride’ service to develop a water transport service towards the western Hamoaze and the west of the Sound** through existing cruise boat services when new landing facilities are completed. The use of the Federation of Operators (identified as a short term action) to set up routes, prices and times would provide an inclusive way to facilitate this sort of arrangement. Action Plymouth City Council to facilitate co-ordination.

In time, this service should be developed into a regular circular water bus service, operated by more than one vessel, linking the Barbican, the Hoe, Millbay, Mount Edgecumbe, Royal William Yard, Stonehouse, Devonport, the Naval Base Visitors Centre and Saltash.

- **The establishment of a service linking Stonehouse, Royal William Yard, Mutton Cove, Millbay and Cremyll** once development has progressed at Royal William Yard, Devonport and Millbay. Action Plymouth City Council.
- That means of funding a fully accessible landing facility for the Hoe is secured when available. Action Plymouth City Council.

11.5 Outcomes

The study has concluded that there are significant short-term opportunities and substantial longer term opportunities for enhanced water transport services in the Sound and Estuaries. Discussions indicate that the short-term opportunities are likely to increase the utilisation of existing craft and bring forward plans to invest in new vessels. It is likely that the increased utilisation will add to employment and if the marketing initiatives discussed above are able to improve the seasonal spread of visitors, then a greater proportion of the employment will be year-round.

It is envisaged that with adequate marketing and other support short to medium term employment targets of five additional full time jobs and eleven seasonal jobs could be achieved. Longer term employment targets could be substantially greater, although very difficult to assess at this stage.

In addition to the increased employment in the water transport operators themselves, there are likely substantial wider benefits. Water transport will help to secure the viability of tourist attractions and other visitor-facing businesses through raising the profile of the waterfront and tangibly delivering customers. Even at an early stage, a firm stated public commitment to water transport can be used in attraction and other visitor facing facility business planning.

The presentation of water transport has the potential to be a key factor in the development of Plymouth and the surrounding districts as visitor destinations. If it is able to play such a role, then the employment supported will be very substantial.

The wider use of water transport is unlikely to lead to significant reductions in traffic congestion in peak hours. However, the introduction of Park and Sail, if feasible, could reduce the need for visitors to travel into the City Centre to find parking. This would lead to a reduction in seasonal congestion and the demand for parking, particularly in the Barbican area.

Acknowledgments

The assistance of the many consultees is acknowledged.

Permission to use the following photographs is also acknowledged:

Section 6 Mount Edgecumbe Country Park

Appendix B Tamar Passenger Ferry
 Tamar Cruising & Cremyll Ferry

Appendix F Fal Water Taxi
 Fowey-Mevagissey Ferry
 Gosport Ferry