

**Planning Application with Navigation Implications:
Re-establishment of Ferry Crossing to Include Landing Stage Improvement
with Steps and Slipway**
Report by Planning Officer

Summary: Planning application for installation of new steps, slipway and mooring posts at existing staithe to facilitate the operation of a river ferry across the River Yare between Bungalow Lane, Thorpe St Andrew and Whitlingham Lane, Trowse.

Member's views are sought on the proposals.

1 Background

- 1.1 The application site comprises an existing concrete staithe located on the south bank of the River Yare. The staithe, known locally as 'Sugarbeet Staithe', measures approximately 7.2m x 2.5m and is accessed via a permissive path which runs the length of the south bank of the River Yare as it passes through Whitlingham Country Park and, additionally, a track running north from the public highway at Whitlingham Lane which forms part of a lease for the Staithe issued to the applicants by the landowner (Norwich City Council).
- 1.2 At present the staithe is in a serviceable but dilapidated condition.
- 1.3 An Ordnance Survey map of 1967 submitted by the applicant shows a pedestrian ferry operating close to the application site; however it is not known when this ferry ceased to operate.

2 The Planning Application

- 2.1 Comments are sought from the Navigation Committee on the planning application submitted to the Broads Authority.
- 2.2 The physical development proposed in this application is relatively modest: the proposal would see the existing staithe repaired and the introduction of a new set of concrete steps and steel handrail to give safe access off the staithe onto a boat. In addition, it is proposed to install a new concrete slipway on the eastern side of the existing staithe. The slipway would measure 2.2m wide and would not extend into the river any further than the existing staithe.
- 2.3 Whilst the development proposed is modest, the alteration would enable the reintroduction of a ferry crossing across the River Yare between Thorpe St Andrew (on the north bank) and Whitlingham Country Park (south).

- 2.4 It is proposed that the new ferry service would be provided by a rowing boat capable of carrying pedestrians and cycles. The ferry service would be 'on demand' rather than scheduled, with the rowing boat moored on the north bank and crossing the river as and when required. It is estimated that the crossing, a distance of approximately 75m, would take around 4 minutes. The applicant has indicated that the ferry would operate 7 days a week during the summer period and as a pre-booked service only outside of this peak period.
- 2.5 The ferry would connect the permissive path and private track (which would be made available to those using the ferry) on the south bank (Whitlingham side) to the public footpath which runs along Bungalow Lane on the north bank (Thorpe side).
- 2.6 The proposed slipway is not required for use in association with the Ferry but is proposed as a useful feature on the river to assist other river users.

3 Navigation Issues

- 3.1 The site is situated on the River Yare and whilst the physical development proposed (namely the works to the existing staithe) would have no impacts on navigation, the reintroduction of a ferry service crossing this part of the river has the potential to impact on other river users.
- 3.2 The ferry would cross between the existing public right of way on the north bank and the existing staithe on the southern bank. The route of the public right of way crosses the curtilage of a riverside chalet.
- 3.3 This chalet is the first in a row of riverside development situated at the southern end of Bungalow Lane and lies immediately west of the Kingfisher Boat Yard. It should be noted that the boatyard (currently partly occupied by 'Freedom Boats', a boat hire company) has a number of stern-on moorings which are regularly used and, by their very nature, restrict the width of the navigation in this part of the river.
- 3.4 The largest craft registered at Freedom Boats measures 13.5m long, giving an approximate river width in the location of the application site of around 26.5m.
- 3.5 It should be noted that this is a busy stretch of river, popular with tourist hire craft and private craft, as well as rowing sculls and canoes which operate out of a number of clubs based around the river at this point.
- 3.6 The application could therefore potentially impact on the safety of existing and proposed boat users. The Head of Safety Management and Head Ranger will investigate the safety implications prior to this application being considered by the Planning Committee.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 Member's views are sought on the development proposed which would facilitate the reintroduction, impact on safety, and any other matters of relevance to navigation. Any comments will be considered as part of the planning process.

Background papers: BA/2014/0055/FUL

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Broads Plan Objectives: None

Appendices: APPENDIX 1 – Site Location Plan

APPENDIX 1

BA/2014/0055/FUL - The Ferry, 3 Bungalow Lane, Thorpe St Andrew
Re-establishment of ferry crossing to include landing stage improvement with steps and slipway

