

Navigation Committee

05 September 2019

Agenda item number 9

Review of Barnes Brinkcraft

Report by Head of Planning

Purpose

To update the Navigation Committee on the operation of the pontoon at the Barnes Brinkcraft site in Hoveton

1. Background

- 1.1. In July 2017, planning permission was granted at the Barnes Brinkcraft site in Hoveton for works described as: ‘Replacement of 158m of quay heading, removal of 280 square metres of land, installation of pontoons, widening of access track and removal of storage shed’ (BA/2017/0155/FUL).
- 1.2. That planning permission was implemented in September 2017. However, the works were not in full accordance with the approved drawings. The main difference was that the new pontoon was located approximately 4.2m closer to the river than originally proposed. A spit of land downstream of the basin, which runs perpendicular to the river and separates this mooring basin from another mooring basin, was also extended out into the river by approximately 1.2m.
- 1.3. Complaints were received about the development, primarily on the grounds of excessive encroachment into the navigation as a result of the location of the new pontoon and boats moored thereon.
- 1.4. A report on the matter was brought before the Navigation Committee at their meeting on 14 December 2017. The Minutes record that:

“It was summarised that the Navigation Committee welcomes investment to provide improved mooring provision but has grave reservations about any encroachment on the navigation of the river and that the Planning Committee take this into account when seeking to resolve the matter with the landowner”.
- 1.5. The matter was then considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on 18 December 2017. The Committee was given various options for addressing the matter and the Minutes record that:

“While the Authority welcomes the continued investment in the site by one of the largest hire boat operators, the encroachment of this unauthorised development into

the navigation area is deemed unacceptable. It is recommended that the Planning Committee authorises officers to negotiate the restriction on the vessel length, an agreed mooring configuration, a scheme of management in respect of the pontoon, and the removal of the build-out”.

- 1.6. Officers subsequently met with representatives of the operator and, at a meeting on 17 January 2018, a draft scheme to limit vessel length was agreed in principle. The details of this were provided to the Navigation Committee at their meeting on 22 February 2018, where they were discussed at length. The Committee agreed that a solution including the removal of one of the perpendicular pontoons and a length restriction would be likely to be satisfactory, that this should be undertaken on a trial basis and, that if no problems occurred, the applicant could be advised to submit a further application making the revised scheme permanent. The Committee asked to be kept apprised of the ongoing situation.
- 1.7. In June 2018, a planning application was submitted by Barnes Brinkcraft (BA/2018/0208/COND). The proposal was to retain the development as built, but with a limit on the length of vessels utilising the moorings to a maximum of 9.5 metres for the two moorings immediately north of the spit of land and a maximum of 8.2 metres for the four adjacent moorings, with the mooring to the north of these to be for a single side on mooring only. The application was considered by the Planning Committee at their meeting on 14 September 2018. The recommendation was for the application to be approved on a permanent basis as the proposal did not meet the criteria required to be considered for a temporary permission. The Planning Committee resolved to approve the planning application.
- 1.8. The planning permission was issued in November 2018.

2. Update

- 2.1. Further to the various discussions, signs were erected by the operator on the mooring pontoon over the summer and autumn of 2018. These signs stipulated that moorings should be stern-on only for the downstream moorings and side-on only for the longer upstream facility. The signs also stipulated a maximum vessel length in order to prevent unacceptable encroachment. There was also a “keep clear” sign attached to the extended spit of land.
- 2.2. The Authority’s navigation rangers have been monitoring the situation. They advise that the sign on the spit has worked well and boats no longer moor there.
- 2.3. The signs indicating the maximum vessel length also broadly work well. On a day to day basis when the yard is open (Monday to Saturday) the restrictions are adhered to and the rangers report that boatyard staff have responded quickly and helpfully when there is a problem and they have been asked to move a boat. This has happened three times. The only time there has been a problem is out of hours (after 18.00 or on a Sunday) when the yard is closed, because while the signs are clear the hirers do not always know

their boat length. If this occurs the ranger will ask the hirer to move the boat, so in practical terms this only becomes a problem if no one is on the boat and this has not yet occurred.

- 2.4. The other issue raised in regard to encroachment was the impact on the large local trip boats, which passage out of the Broads Tours basin opposite. The ranger advises that the skippers have been asked of their experiences and report no problems when the restrictions shown on the signs are being adhered to.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. The construction of the new mooring pontoon forward of its approved position was a matter of considerable concern to the Navigation Committee, navigation staff and river users. It also represented a breach of a planning condition. A compromise solution was negotiated and has been found to be effective in protecting the interests of navigation while increasing the provision of visitor moorings in Hoveton.

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Background papers: [BA/2018/0208/COND application files](#)