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# East Cowes

Design brief\_December 2003

Supported by



# 1 Introduction

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) is working in partnership with the Isle of Wight Council and the Isle of Wight Economic Partnership on the Cowes Waterfront initiative. This is a holistic regeneration project which seeks to attract investment, create jobs and bring new mixed-use facilities to the communities of Cowes, East Cowes and Newport Harbour, Isle of Wight.

The main aim of the Cowes Waterfront project is to strengthen the Island's position as a centre of excellence for the composites and specialist marine sectors. It will build on the wealth of technical expertise and skills and provide the resources and infrastructure that businesses need – to build on their successes, facilitate expansion and create new job opportunities. This ambitious project proposes to use existing sites and premises to support the future development of the Isle of Wight economy.

The project was inspired by its vision to make the Solent location the global centre for yacht racing technology, promoting the area as “the home of world yachting”. Cowes is already home to some of the world's most prestigious sailing teams, including GBR Challenges.

SEEDA recently acquired the 8 ha (20 acre) former GKN North Works site in East Cowes. The site has a long history of marine and aerospace engineering and lies adjacent to East Cowes, within the Medina Valley priority area.

The North Works site, together with other adjoining land, presents a significant opportunity to regenerate East Cowes town centre.

SEEDA's objective is to create a mixed-use development. It is envisaged that the proposals will include a mix of homes, shops, leisure facilities and commercial uses, including workspace, a new marine base, and possibly a new marina and improved ferry facilities.

As part of the regeneration process, SEEDA proposes to appoint a suitably qualified urban designer or architectural practice to help develop a vision for the future regeneration of the site and East Cowes town centre.



# 2 SEEDA

SEEDA is one of the nine English Regional Development Agencies created by the Government. It was established in April 1999 to take the strategic lead in promoting the sustainable economic development of the region.

The Agency works with its partners to make the South East of England a world class region, achieving sustainable development and enhanced quality of life. The success that SEEDA achieves against its mission is measured by the levels of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social inclusion across the region.

The five statutory objectives under the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998 are:

- To further economic development and regeneration;
- To promote business efficiency;
- To promote employment;
- To enhance the development and application of skills; and
- To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

The Cowes Waterfront project has four elements:

- Business** – providing resources and infrastructure for businesses to grow and expand
- Communities** – creating job opportunities and enhancing community living with improved amenities
- Environment** – maintaining and enhancing the unique environmental resources of the Medina Valley
- Infrastructure** – bringing under used and derelict sites and premises back into productive use



### 3 Objectives

Working closely with the Cowes Waterfront partners, SEEDA intends to develop an overall vision and masterplan for the site and East Cowes town centre. This will then lead to the submission of outline planning applications and infrastructure works necessary to prepare the area for development.

The masterplan should:

- Create a vision for East Cowes town centre and waterfront.
- Create a sustainable vision.
- Create a sense of place.
- Improve the “offer” of East Cowes.
- Provide new public spaces.
- Improve public transport facilities.
- Improve vehicle and passenger ferry facilities.
- Examine new uses for existing buildings.
- Provide for a marine base.
- Act as an exemplar mixed-use development scheme.
- Provide a benchmark for new townscape and density.



The Agency may convert some of the existing buildings and is likely to select private sector partners to develop out phases of the overall masterplan. SEEDA wishes to develop a vision and set up a process that will ensure the delivery of a regeneration project that incorporates the highest design quality and best practice in terms of energy and resource consumption.

It is recognised that to realise these ambitions within the development process will require a detailed understanding of the development potential of the site.

SEEDA proposes to work with a multi-disciplinary team of suitably qualified consultants in order to:

- Prepare a vision and masterplan framework for East Cowes focusing on the North Works site. This framework will be required to address issues including land use, the siting of buildings, the bulk and massing of buildings, the public realm, access and circulation, the character and quality of the built form.
- Prepare development briefs to a sufficient level of detail to guide and inform the future development of phases.
- Prepare and submit outline planning applications with necessary supporting information.
- Prepare illustrative material to articulate the vision and ambitions for the site.
- Prepare and submit planning applications for site preparation works and advanced infrastructure works.
- Undertake advanced infrastructure and remediation works necessary to enable development to take place.

SEEDA has received initial advice from its development consultants, civil, structural and environmental engineers. The selected design practice will be required to lead this team to develop the design framework and provide the necessary input into the defined key stages of work in the period up to, and including, the submission of an outline planning application for the site.



## 4\_ The appointment of a design practice

SEEDA wishes to appoint a suitably qualified design team (architect, urban designer or masterplanner) to participate in the pre-development stages outlined in the previous section.

The nature of this project, and the specific role that the chosen design practice will need to play, implies a particular set of skills, requirements, and experience. This experience may be described as follows:

- Working on large-scale mixed-use projects in the role of a lead masterplanner.
- Re-use and conversion of former industrial buildings.
- Creating high quality spaces and places.
- Delivering a high quality product within the constraints of a defined budget.
- Integrating innovative techniques to reduce energy and resource consumption.



## 6\_ Further information

The appointment will be for three years with an option for SEEDA to extend that period by up to two years.

A notice of this tender is being published in the supplement to the Official Journal of the European Communities. Copies of the OJEC notice can be found, when published, on the Tenders Electronic Daily website, <http://ted.publications.eu.int>

The proposals, including legal, economic and technical information as set out in the OJEC notice, and also in this document, must be returned to Kate Hyner of SEEDA at:

SEEDA Headquarters  
Cross Lanes  
Guildford  
Surrey GU1 1YA  
United Kingdom

by 12.00 noon on Monday,  
15 December 2003

Further details can be found at  
[www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)



## 5\_ Process

As part of the process of selecting a design practice, interested parties are asked to respond to this brief by **12.00 noon, Monday, 15 December 2003.**

Based on the responses to the brief, up to five practices will be invited to participate in a limited design exercise and will be selected on the basis of design quality. Based on a more detailed brief, the five selected design practices will then be asked to participate in a competitive interview process. This process will seek to explore the individual

practices' experience, their initial response on the site, their method of working and their approach to the particular commission.

It is anticipated that this final stage of the selection process will span a four week period, commencing with the issuing of the detailed brief and ending with a presentation to a panel that is likely to comprise representatives from SEEDA, Isle of Wight Council, Isle of Wight Economic Partnership, English Partnerships and also the South East Regional Design Panel.

Upon completion of the design exercise, the selected practice will be invited to lead with SEEDA, the team of consultants, to develop a vision and masterplan for the sites in East Cowes. The proposals will include a sufficient level of detail to allow for the submission of outline planning applications for the area.