Ryde, Gateway to the Isle of Wight

Ryde History

- 1856 - completion of initial development of the railway from St. Johns to Ryde seen as a key event in the exploitation of the island. The construction of the railway led to the development of the town and helped to establish Ryde as the main gateway to the Isle of Wight. The railway opened in 1856 and was a major factor in the growth of the town.

- 1876 - the construction of the pier, connecting the town with the mainland, was completed. This was followed by the construction of the Esplanade in 1878, which provided a link between the town and the sea. The Esplanade was a significant development as it provided a new focus for the town and helped to establish Ryde as a popular seaside destination.

- 1880 - the construction of the Canoe Lake, a large artificial lake, was completed. This was followed by the construction of the pier head in 1895, which provided a new focal point for the town and helped to establish Ryde as a popular seaside destination.

- 1895 - a concert pavilion was constructed at the pier head. This was followed by the construction of the pier, which was completed in 1901, and provided a new focal point for the town and helped to establish Ryde as a popular seaside destination.

- 1961 - the Theatre Royal was burnt down, which was a significant event in the history of the town.

Ryde - Summary Analysis

1. Ryde - current Pier head is dominated by travel. The large car park, train and ferry port leaving very little public space.
2. Ryde - priority given to cars and train with pedestrian constraints to small animal path.
3. Pier Banc/shoal - large closed development, encourages car parking. Train tracks, ferry port, bus and train station create untidy seaward front separating town from beach.
4. Marine - wrong location and predominantly unusable.
5. Roads - dual carriageway dividing town and seaward.
6. Population - Generally low levels of employment, high levels of welfare, and an ageing population.
7. Travel - town dominated by priority given to car.
8. Flood - plan of flooding in the valley and poor flood infrastructure. Travels East and West Ryde and isolates the town core.

Ryde is a seaside town yet has a surprisingly detached relationship to the sea. There are few external leading directly down to it, or facing seaward, with only the Esplanade having an active frontage towards the sea. A surplus of massed facilities and transport infrastructure. Frequently owns direct water front connections.

The water side frontages are also set back with large gaps, block out and irregular front land based promenades to the seaward. Other active frontages are largely disposed within the traffic ring (3 below) with the most prosperous areas appearing towards the town's north west.

The buildings surrounding the historic town core are

- The oldest part of Ryde has an established street plan, though has been somewhat altered. The modern buildings are interspersed between the historic streets and provide a sense of continuity and character to the town. The buildings are largely residential, with mixed use on the main commercial street, Union Street, starting on the Esplanade and extending up to the south.

- Modern industrial buildings are mainly sited along the Monktonmead Brook valley, and between residential areas. Much of the Monktonmead Brook flood plain remains undeveloped because of the fluvial (river) flood risk.

- The sea front has a scattering of public buildings interspersed between transport infrastructure. Modern industrial buildings are mainly sited along the Monktonmead Brook valley, and between residential areas.

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2. Pier - the triangular point between the pier and town is also the junction between the two primary roads of the town, the high street, and the new tram line. On Skarkhaven see pier new development by Arkitekter + Sprunt examples how tourism has benefited significantly.

3. Pier Junction - If travelling by ferry the Pier Head will be the first point of arrival, it is important to celebrate this and create a memorable first and last impression. The former train line, connecting Ryde pier to the Bay, is also provided with a new tram line along the shared surface, connecting the town square and transport interchange.

4. Pier Base - the knuckle joint between the pier and base is the first point of arrival, it is important to celebrate this and create a memorable first and last impression.

5. Pier Neck - is the knuckle joint between the pier and head, and creates a valley route following the river, enabling the two sides of the town to be better connected.

6. Pier Head - is the knuckle joint between the pier and base, and creates a valley route following the river, enabling the two sides of the town to be better connected.

7. River development - support the population within the East of Ryde, and create a valley route following the river, enabling the two sides of the town to be better connected.

8. River Valley - the river valley in this location is a flood risk, so a mitigation strategy is proposed allowing accommodation and create a valley route following the river, enabling the two sides of the town to be better connected.


10. New pier - the new pier extension will run along primary town roads to reduce car dependence.

11. Shared surface - Esplanade.

12. New town square & transport interchange - the new travel route will as a feature, a new housing development will support the population within the East of Ryde, and the new development down the river. This - is the knuckle joint between the seafront and the new development north of the esplanade, and relocating the hover pier, town square & transport interchange

13. Cycle route and greenway along shared surface, enabling the two sides of the town to be better connected.

14. Cycle route - the cycle route replacing sea level pier will run along primary town roads to reduce car dependence.

15. Cycle route starting on pier - the cycle route replacing sea level pier will run along primary town roads to reduce car dependence.


17. Dyke-In-Dune Seafront. The proposed solution to the seafront strip back the existing Esplanade frontage. Demolition waste will be used as a 2.5 meter dyke running the frontage length with planned defences against anticipated tidal flooding and high water levels for 100 year protection. The proposed solution is a seawall, extending mainly using sand from the beach, and creating a new beach with sand from the beach. A soft engineering solution is to allow beach frontages and the new development to integrated to serve the larger IoW towns. On the rail track - replacing the train with a tram system running over shared surfaces is proposed - to join the existing pier structure in the landable area of the pier armatures, a new town square is created forming a dynamic meeting point on arrival, and allowing public events and activities to be hosted.

18. Cycle route - the cycle route replacing sea level pier will run along primary town roads to reduce car dependence.

19. Cycle route starting on pier - the cycle route replacing sea level pier will run along primary town roads to reduce car dependence.

20. Tram - tram route replacing train service, will run across the new tram line. This connects to the main town square and transport interchange.


22. Bus Station - bus station, shared surface.

23. Pier - pier, town square & transport interchange. The new pier is developed by Arkitekter + Sprunt examples how tourism has benefited significantly.

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