

Hello Douglas

Thanks for replying to my phone call on Wednesday morning I know you must be very busy in the present climate of change so an email for you to read when time is available is probably the best way to make you aware of the value of the natural resource of fish which is passing Shetland by each year.

The unique geographical position of Shetland on the edge of the Gulf Stream means the main shoal of mackerel feeds and passes close by Shetland each year as it migrates into the South West and is fished by boats of many nationalities, a large tonnage of which is taken within 50 miles of the Shetland coastline.

Last year in October the last landing of our Mackerel Quota was taken 45 miles East of Whalsay, a fleet of vessels of various nationalities were also working there on the migrating shoals which eventually moved into the NW and then West past the North of Shetland before heading SW.

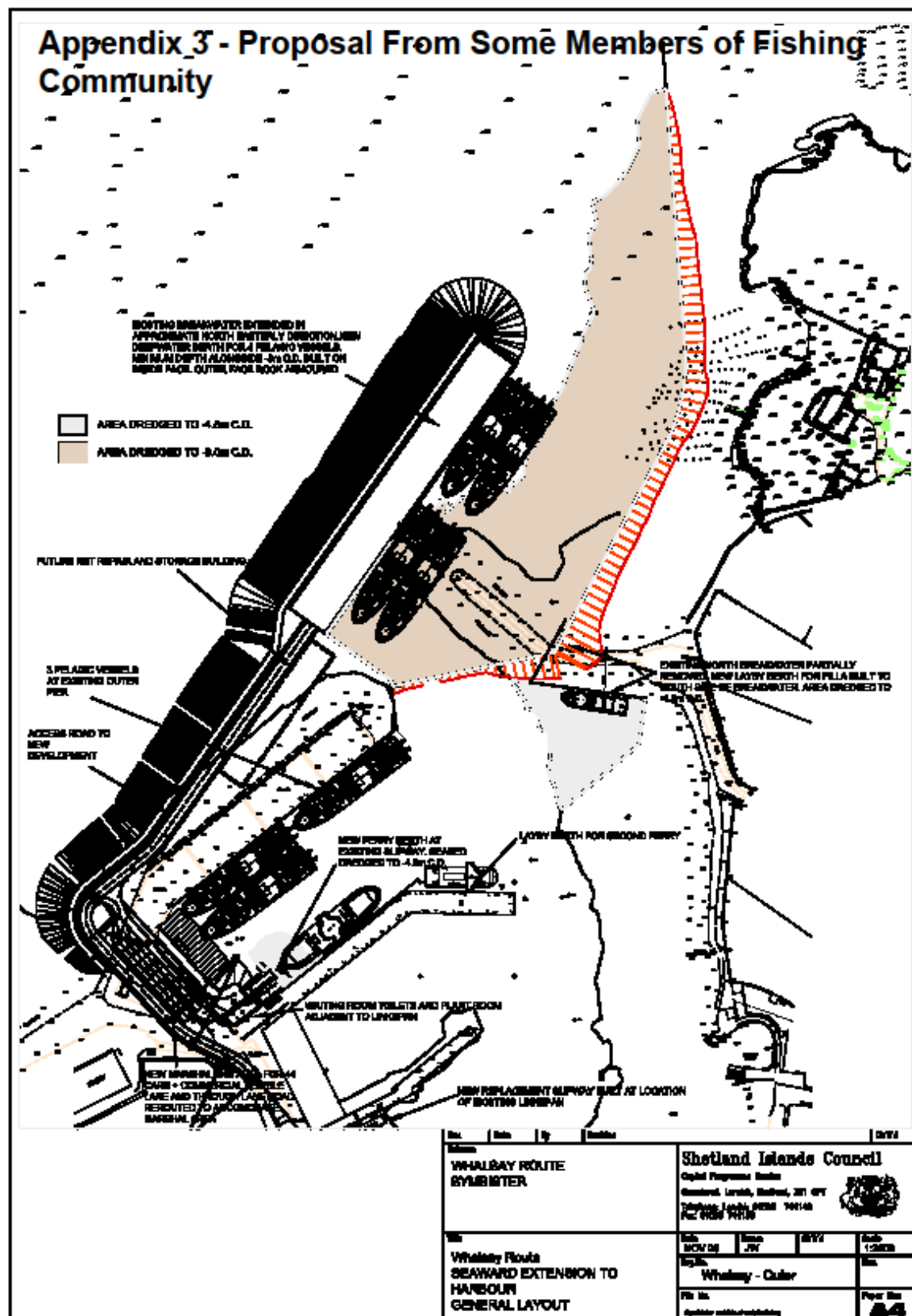
Norwegian fishing vessels alone took over £100 million's worth of mackerel from within 50 miles of Shetland most of it taken back past Shetland to Norway to be processed. Many of the boats were inshore vessels some of which were small handliners normally found fishing in Norwegian fjords. Many of these vessels tried to land to Shetland catch but had to be turned away as they were working at full production so these small boats had no option but to steam back to Norway in whatever weather conditions there were at the time.

In Whalsay we have a fleet of Pelagic fishing vessels holding licence's to fish about 28% of the UK mackerel quota's these vessels have had to evolve and modernise to keep pace with the requirements of the modern markets, unfortunately our home harbour has not kept pace with the changes our fleet have had to endure and is now difficult to access because of the sharp turn the lengthened vessels have to make in the harbour entrance to get to their berths.

During this summer herring fishing the Charisma's forward thruster motor burnt out and had to be removed to be fixed, this meant that the vessel could not go to her home port to lay up till the repairs were done as she could not negotiate the tight turns into the Whalsay harbour, the Lerwick harbour authority were having problems finding a berth but eventually a berth was found where she could tie up for the few weeks she needs for the required repairs before she can access her home port again.

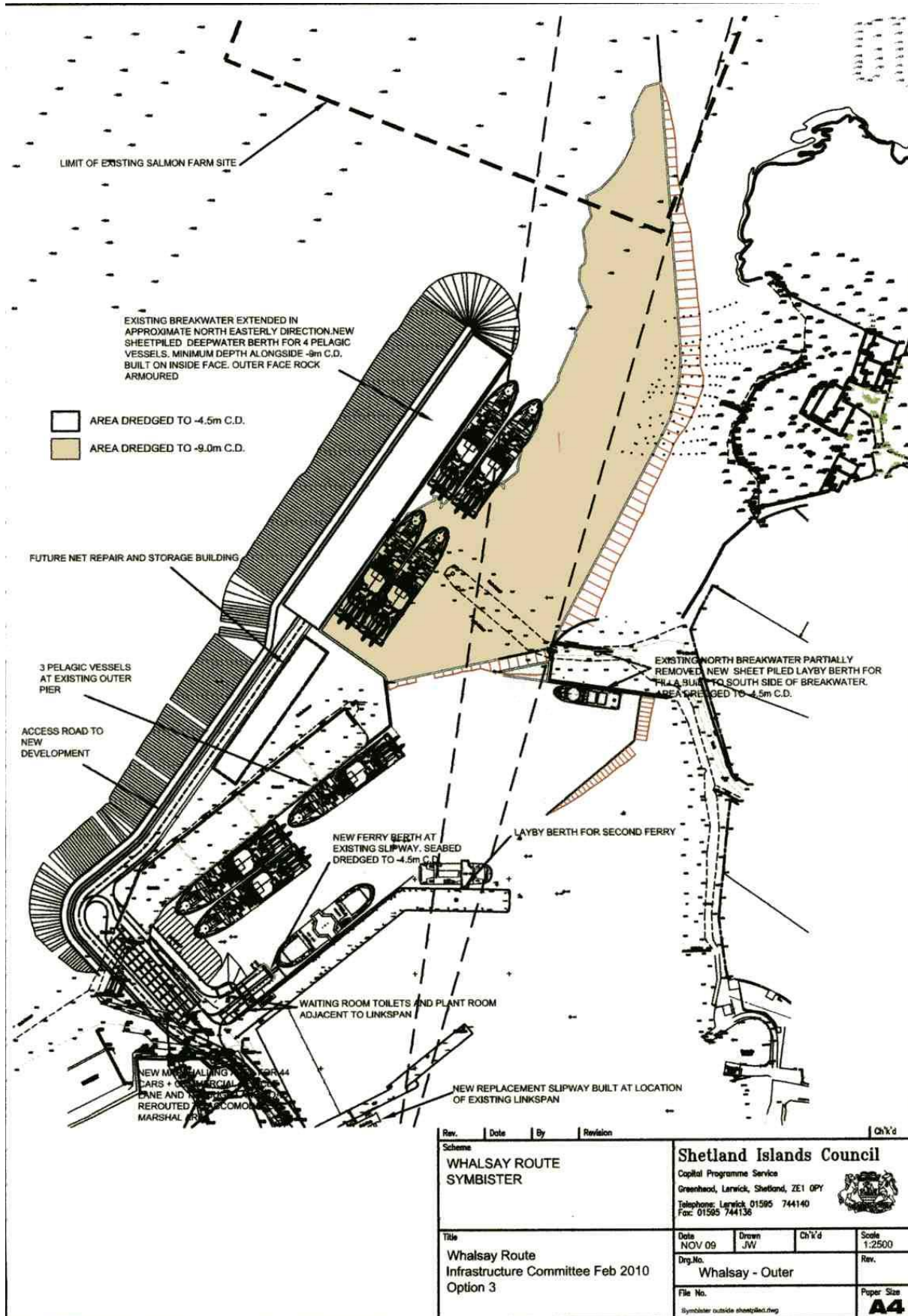
It has been suggested that we could moor these vessels elsewhere but safe layup berths in Shetland in the required water depths for vessels of this size are hard to find and as these vessels require power 24/7 from an onboard generator our engineers and crew also require 24 hour access to them in case of emergency.

When the S.I.C. were considering the site of a new ferry terminal in Whalsay we saw this as the perfect opportunity to get our home harbour improved for the benefit of all without in our opinion, compromising the ferry service whatsoever. We presented the Infrastructure department with various options for improving the harbour in conjunction with new ferry terminals in several positions but none appeared to satisfy the ferry and Infrastructure departments.

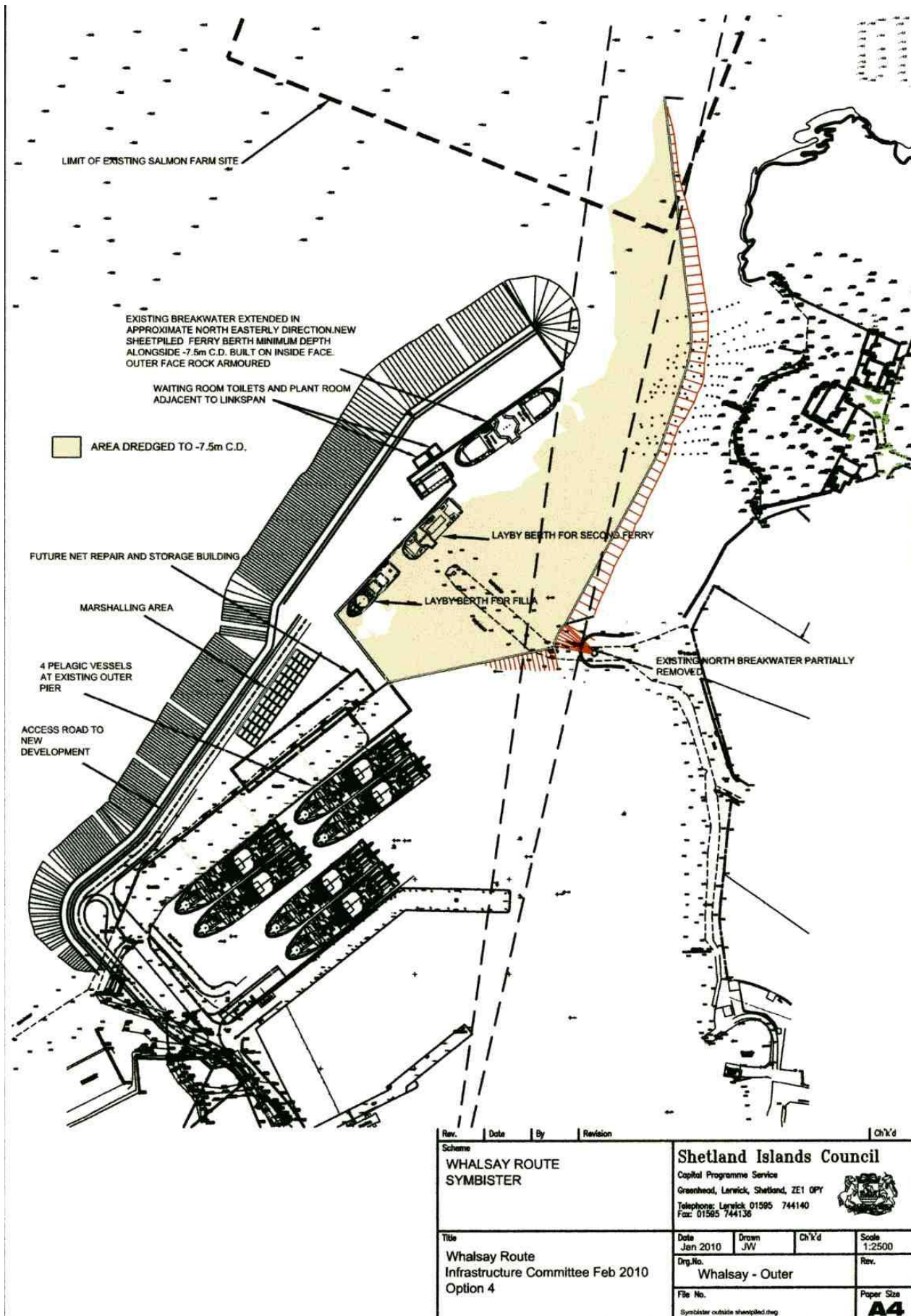


We presented harbour development proposal's to the Infrastructure department in good faith.

But our faith was in error as someone shortened the North breakwater in two separate drawings



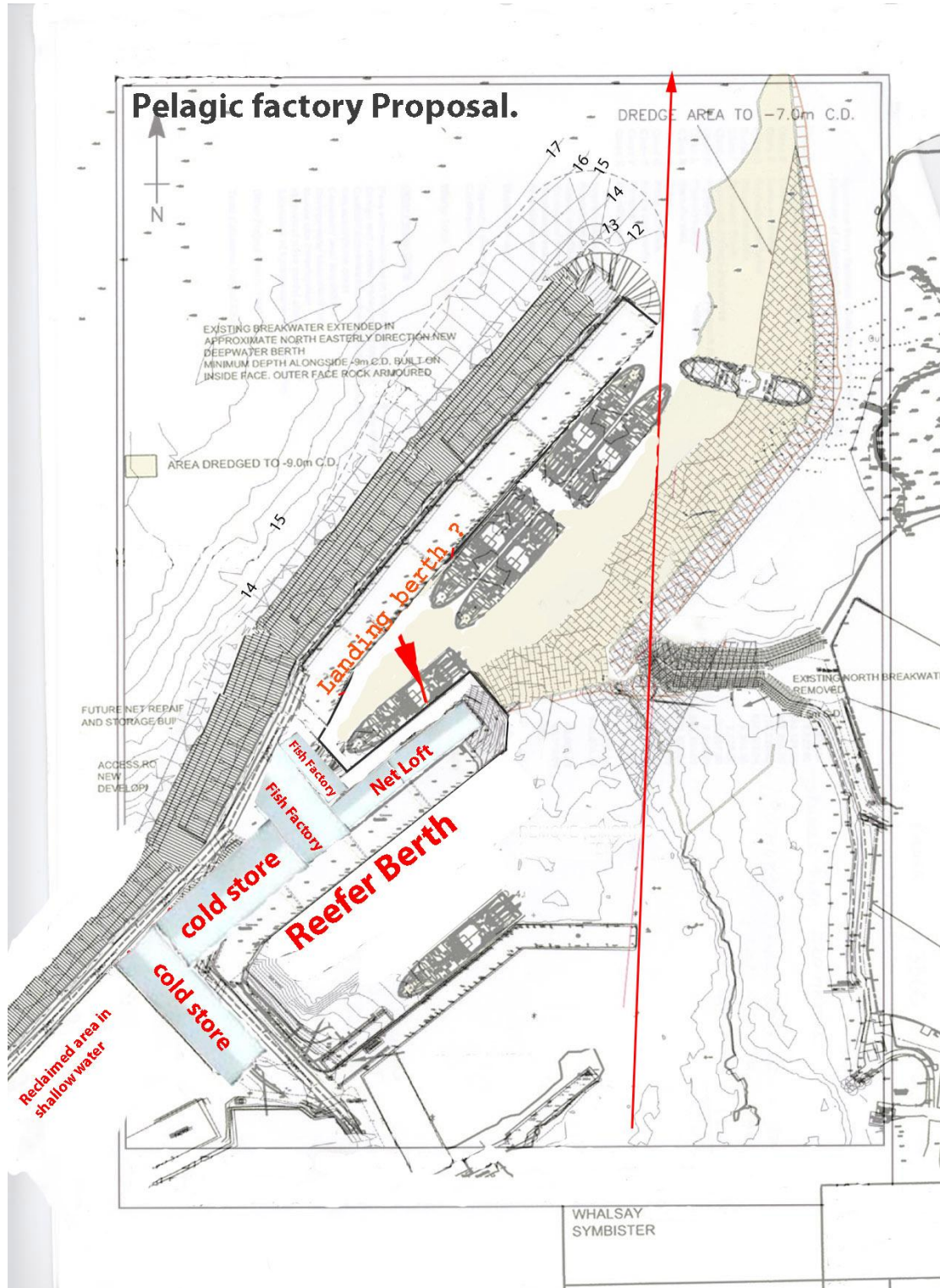




which would allow motion to get into the inner harbour thus sabotaging our proposal, which was then presented in a report to the councillors.

It appeared to us that they were so obsessed with the building of a whole new harbour for the exclusive use of ferries in the North Voe of Symbister that they were prepared to sabotage any South Voe proposal we put to them.

When the council decided to pursue fixed links this allowed us to consider a harbour development without ferries so we drew up a plan to make Symbister a harbour to eventually generate profit for the S.I.C.



The red line in the proposal above shows the three piers overlapped so the inner harbour would be sheltered that line was also included in the proposal sent to the infrastructure department.



We have discussed this proposal with various international fish processors and they appear to be interested but nothing can happen without the harbour being developed.



A Norwegian owned pelagic factory in Shetland would enable them access to European markets clear of E.U. import tariffs so marketing of the produce in Europe would be more cost effective.



The Norwegians asked questions like, **would there be any Grants available for the project?**

The last time I enquired about grants I was told, "if the piers and buildings could be shown to be linked to fishing the project could be eligible for E.U. grants of from %40 to %80 from the E.U.fisheries fund", that fund is unfortunately no longer available but a new scheme is due to be started in 2013 we will not know if it would be eligible for that fund until we get more details, but we will also never know unless we try.

Another question they asked was **would the pelagic vessels make an investment in a factory?**

The pelagic P.O. were one of the leading lights in setting up the Shetland Catch factory and still hold a considerable amount of shares, I would think the owners of the pelagic vessels would consider the building of a pelagic fish factory and providing jobs in their home port a very worthwhile investment. Shetland Catch created many jobs in Lerwick and has been generating Millions of pounds in landing dues for the Lerwick harbour trust for many years; this fish would also generate income when the fish left the factory.

With Whalsay being an S.I.C. harbour all landing and harbour dues would be paid directly to the S.I.C. and if we included a net repair loft in the buildings this would be an extra business to entice foreign vessels into the harbour for net maintenance and repairs perhaps while they were passing Shetland on route to markets abroad or landing fish to a factory in Shetland.

Shetland being Islands has had to survive by enticing vessels into its ports and anchorages for hundreds of years and much of its revenue's in those years provided by the fishing around our shores, in 2008 £250 million of the £700 million economy of Shetland was provided by fishing and aquaculture (figures obtained from N.A.F.C. in Scalloway.)

These are the industries the people of Shetland have been involved in for centuries and know how to work, unfortunately these industries which have served us so well in the past now appear to be overlooked by our councillors as they rush headlong into investments in heavily subsidised wind generators which will require at some time in the near future regular maintenance and similar to our inter-island ferries and terminals, they will require to be replaced, but at what cost ,and will there be subsidies in place for the turbines then?

This is not a request for a handout, this is a very worthwhile investment opportunity in a project to make profit for the S.I.C and also with investment from the private sector, provide jobs in an industry which has served Shetland so well in **the past, the present, and** with proper planning and investment will do so in **the future** .

Best regards William Polson.