

Dear Councillors Lloyd, Carpenter, Jenner, Milne, Raines, Rennie, Gwen Robinson, Scott, Satchwell, Thomas, Kennett, Gary Robinson, Keast

1. INTRODUCTION

Our attendance at the 10 March Scrutiny Meeting was limited to 2.5 minutes each, but of course our attention was vivid. The following is our reflection on the issues and our wish to be involved in the essential steps to achieve a sustainable solution.

We agree with the Board that the Project Team's supporting arguments require additional detailed study. Our roads' expert, Professor Hounsell, was almost driven to levitation during the presentation, and is keen to add his knowledge and experience to the debate (but this was not allowed by process.) We should seek ways to facilitate debate (not presentations) and encourage transparency to complete the task.

The Inspectorate in 2013 recognised the unique issues on Hayling with the statement:

"I concur that growth on Hayling Island should be limited/restricted, to take account of flood risk, the need to minimise impacts on the natural environment of Chichester and Langstone harbours and access difficulties on the local road network at peak hours."

The chart below shows the HBC view on the inclusivity of the HI Infrastructure Delivery Plan.



2. FUNDING

The project funding issues were accurately assessed by the Board. Industry norms would call for all projects requiring capital funding and maintenance expenses to be accompanied by the costing and fund-sourcing schedule.

Projects without the financial resources would be delayed until the means to deliver were in place.

3. ROAD NETWORK

On the subject of the road network, there are some major and numerous minor shortcomings. We would encourage the involvement of Professor Hounsell in any review process to guarantee the best independent expertise is brought to bear.

The consultant's view presented at the meeting was a technical appraisal of the microsim analysis. So it looked at what was done, not what should have been done. (This is like asking your best friend to mark your homework.)

The Island's limited road access is unique, and requires the most experienced brains available to ensure any actions taken now are sustainable.

Some key issues were:

- The Inspector Fox statement used in the presentation was out of context. The Inspector was responding to a specific development Appeal. He was not writing a commandment which would be relevant to Hayling Island.
- The response to the 2036 time limit for the TA is a major issue, as is the Team's definition of not having to include pre-existing conditions. The Team's response is selective. Government advice to all authorities is that a sustainable infrastructure is provided for the project's lifecycle. In this case of the TA, it should be a minimum of 60 years. The team's assumption that the project guidelines take precedent over this is a major issue given that the objective of the Local Plan is to grow the community of the Borough significantly.

At this stage, it is important to reflect on the Team's view that the infrastructure impacts of the Local Plan are limited to 2036. This cannot be correct because:

- Everything that has happened or will happen in the Borough from 2006 onwards is a result of the Local Plan.
- There is no other plan.
- Therefore, the only influences which could be claimed as pre-existing are pre-21st Century. What happens in 2037, 2057 or 2097 will be the direct result of the decisions made on the Local Plan. Suggesting this is not the case is an exercise in 'plausible deniability.'
- The world is not going to stop in 2036, and neither is the Plan.

Hayling Island is the only beachfront in the Borough, and the Local Plan incorporates a major programme to develop amenities and attract and grow leisure and tourist traffic to the Island. The impact of the Local Plan is designed to grow the environment – 2036 is where it starts, not where it ends.

All of the traffic increases being planned will happen after 2036. More tourists mean more traffic.

The Team said they were required to account only for the impact of the Local Plan. That is precisely what we are asking them to do.

We believe we should all understand the impact on our unique environment before making decisions which may prove irrevocable. Flow/Capacity analysis of the bridge will allow us all to understand where we are on the capacity scale, and allow decisions for the future to be influenced by facts, not opinions.

The Team's view that any decisions made now are just a point on the Local Plan's progression, and that many more opportunities for change will avail themselves moving forward, is unsubstantiated and without precedent. Where and when are these check points legislated?

4. HOUSING

The question on housing growth forecast, particularly with regard to medium windfall developments, was raised. The Team's response was that it is not included because it is difficult to estimate, and including it may distort the CIL and mitigation-funding process.

The points for consideration are:

- Traffic forecasting is an artform, not a science, but it is an essential tool to predict the future. This is why all responsible projects provide a range of results from Worst to Best case, to allow the stakeholders to reach responsible conclusions. Excluding this historic largest housing growth category means the TA is based on incomplete data. It is a basic tenet that if the model input is incomplete, the result will also be incomplete.
- The point that the windfall inclusion may distort the funding model should not be a problem as the funding model would follow the ranges as above, and we should remember that even the allocations in the Plan are not guaranteed (e.g. the Rook Farm project will probably end up in a 'tooth and nail' war with the residents.)

5. FLOOD RISK

The fact that the HI flood risk is not referenced in the Local Plan, the TA or the TA Addendum means that the authors chose to exclude it for some reason. The responses under scrutiny substantiate this view as Coastal Strategy was not included in the TA.

The flood risks for current and future generations is one of the major concerns for all.

The West Beach storm events in February were caused by a fairly low tide, 4.8 metres. You may have seen the recent Langstone, Northney, Billy Trail, Pond Head and Kench flooding on 12 March. (This was a sunny day, no wind, with a tide of 5.5 mtrs.) The HI Coastal Strategy, which is about to start, will show us the short- and long-term impact of climate change with a tide rise prediction to the end of the century of 1.4mtrs, double the current estimate of .7mtrs. This is likely to increase further.

This Coastal Strategy will use the latest tidal knowledge and predictions, and in two years' time will provide the detailed status and coastal options recommended. This may then be followed by defence proposals for funding approval by Government.

The current Government flood defence funding strategy is based solely on the value of property defended on an 8:1 cost/protection ratio.

We know that in the future we are going to be experiencing high tides close to 7mtrs with additional wave height between 2-4 mtrs on-the-beach. These will be periodic of course because the tide goes up and down every 12 hours.

80% of the Island's coast (from Beachlands clockwise up the west coast to the bridge and down the east coast to Cockle Rythe – the recycling centre) does not satisfy the 8:1 funding

ratio requirement and therefore is unlikely to attract funding from this source. And looking at the flood issues across the country, funding seems even less likely.

In addition, over 50% of the Island's landmass is classified Flood Zone 3 based on the old tidal prediction of .7mtrs. This prediction, now doubled to 1.4mtrs, will be included in the base for the new coastal strategy.

How would we explain to the existing and new residents that the housebuilding programme went ahead and ignored the risks to the investments in their properties?

6. THE HAYLING ISLAND INFRASTRUCTURE ADVISORY GROUP

There was a strong inference from the Team that a satisfactory communications interface has existed and continued with the community through the Advisory Group. This, sadly, is not true.

All 'non-aligned' members of the Group reject that view.

The Group, specifically set up to advise on the HI Infrastructure, has been prevented from discharging their accountability, as since 2018 the Group has only been called five times.

The promises from HBC to include the Group in the TA parameter-setup, modelling process and project evaluation (including appropriate training and education) was not forthcoming. As a consequence, the Advisory Group had no influence on the design or production of the TA.

The issue is very important, not because a few residents are upset or feel bruised by the experience, but because the Team are using the Group as a positive selling point in support of the Local Plan, both to the Members and the Inspectorate.

This misrepresents the situation and must stop!

We will make ourselves available any time for input or clarification.

Thank you all.

Dave Parham
Save Our Island Group

17 March 2020