

## **SAVE OUR ISLAND UPDATE**

From Dave Parham, Save Our Island Group

*We have kindly been given a regular 450-word column in the Hayling Herald. It is our intention each month to focus on issues which require your attention.*

The revetments at West Beach have been removed, leaving only 50 mtrs in place. There is a small amount of repair work.

This is just the next stage in Havant Borough Council's (HBC) intention to allow the beach from Beachlands to Gunner Point to erode naturally. This decision was taken back in 2008 – long before the facts about Global Warming were known. The primary influence came as a recommendation by the Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP) to allow the shoreline to erode with no intervention ever. The ESCP is not an independent voice, and they work for HBC on Hayling Island projects.

The ESCP are now engaged in a Hayling Island Coastal Strategy (completion due in 2022) at which time we will only know what their recommendations to HBC are in relation to the Hayling Island coast. They will not change their position on West Beach.

These are the facts of our situation:

The land elevations from West Beach over West Town to the Billy Trail are between 1&6 mtrs above the Mean Sea Level datum. In the January 2020 storms the sea was 3.3 mtrs above this datum, with an additional 4 mtr wave height and a very high energy wave interval of over 20 seconds, caused by the unusual position of Hayling Island. (All statistics measured by the CHIMET weather station.)

This was not the highest tide of the year.

The current Environment Agency forecast is for the sea height to increase by 1.4 mtrs out to 2100, and this forecast is expected to increase significantly over time.

Imagine the consequences of this storm on a beach now moved closer to the Par 3 with the sea 2 mtrs higher!!

Therefore over time our leisure amenities of two golf courses, the Inn on the Beach, 200 beach huts, car parking and SSSI reserves will progressively degrade, with consequential loss of substantial business and HBC revenues. These facts are not in dispute (see the ESCP projection on [escp.org.uk/west-beach](https://escp.org.uk/west-beach).)

You might think these revenues would have been better spent on maintaining the sea defences.

We raised this issue with Alan Mak MP and the ESCP at Alan Mak's Environment Roundtable in April 2020, and no change in approach is expected based on their negative responses.

Following a letter setting out concerns on the Local Plan (including West Beach,) HBC Council Leader Michael Wilson has written to 14 of the residents' representatives on the Hayling Island Infrastructure Advisory Group, characterising our opinions as unrepresentative, and stating that only he (and HBC) are working in your best interests.

For Michael, your silence is golden and is seen as your tacit approval of the HBC Local Plan, promoting the building of a minimum of 1300 new homes in the near future. More on this next month.

Please write now and tell your Councillors and the Hayling Herald what you think.