

DURING June & July, Save Our Island and other Hayling Island resident representatives have been preparing for attendance at the 5-day examination by Secretary of State Jenrick's Inspectorate of Havant Borough Council's (HBC) Local Plan. This was Stage 1 of the process, and took place 12-16 July. (You can follow all the sessions on <https://www.havant.gov.uk/local-plan-examination-hearing-previous-meetings>

As we reported previously, residents' contributions to discussions on HBC's Local Plan were strictly limited to 5 minute presentations or less. At the Examination Meetings, representatives were provided all the time they required to make their deputations without interruption, a significant improvement and a lesson HBC should take note of.

The HI representatives concentrated their input on community needs, road network capacity, sea and surface water flooding, harbour and beach pollution, ecology, and wildlife protection.

There is limited space here to provide a detailed review of the proceedings, but key points include:

- The Inspectors asked HBC the questions again which have been raised by resident representatives over past years. The issues relating to HI were allocated the whole day on Wednesday 14 July, and HI representatives were the major contributors throughout this debate.
- Watching the interaction between HBC Officers and the two Inspectors, we believe that further work and clarification will be required for HI, including:
  - The use of 'neutral period' traffic data used for the Transport Assessment (no summer weekends or holiday traffic have been included)
  - No capacity analysis of the A3023/Bridge complex
  - Unclear position on the Harbour pollution risks
  - Lack of detailed flood risk assessment to the road and coasts including the bimodal wave threat
  - Unresolved mitigation for wildlife
  - Wellbeing of the community resulting from infrastructure overload

Three other points are worthy of note:

- Rook Farm  
A proposal for approx. 400 homes is in progress and supported by HBC Officers. Outstanding issues on this site are:
  - Historic site preservation not resolved (Roman villa and road)
  - Wildlife mitigation not resolved (negotiations with HI landowner are in progress to mitigate the large sites of Rook Farm and Campdown
  - Sightlines for the 12<sup>th</sup> Century church
  - Disagreement on the access route to the site.
- HBC are proposing to move the centre of leisure activities from Beachlands to Eastoke Corner, where there is limited space, limited car parking, no public transport hub, no growth room and no safe bathing areas. I suspect the reason is driven by the fact that Eastoke Corner's soft shingle bank is Government-

funded and it means at Beachlands, HBC can avoid funding any flood protection. This is an unsupportable proposal.

- The most serious beach erosion is caused by the bimodal wave effect (see Save Our Island's article in March 2021 Hayling Herald). The impact assessment is a 'work in progress' by Coastal Partners, and the results will not be known until 2022.
- The lead HBC Officer stated for the avoidance of doubt that all of the developments on Hayling Island are required to achieve Havant Borough's housing stock target, and intimating that failure to achieve this target will have serious consequences. It is hard not to conclude that this objective is now placed ahead of and above the Councillors' constitutional responsibility to focus their work on the needs and aspirations of this vulnerable community.
- In the next issue we will be covering the lack of openness and transparency by HBC including the questionable use of consultants to achieve their objectives.