

Save Our Island February 2023 Submission to the Hayling Herald

AS WE ENTER a new year, it is important for us to take stock and look at the future.

The disgraceful Sinah Lane Barrett development was approved (we are not sure by whom) as a parting gift from the East Hampshire-led Havant Borough Council, and forced through prior to the Government Inspectorate's intention to evaluate the Council's Local Plan in July 2021.

Save Our Island and all the representative groups worked energetically to interact with the Inspectors to represent the interests of our Island. The result of the Inspectors' investigations was that the Council's Local Plan was considered unsound, and the recommendation was to withdraw the Plan and basically re-write it.

Subsequently, Havant Borough Council took the necessary action to separate from East Hampshire District Council as the interests of Borough residents were not being correctly understood or addressed.

A new Local Plan is now being prepared, and hopefully it will be focused on the community's needs and wellbeing, as required by Government.

In April 2022, we – and the Council – formally asked the Government, via the Secretary of State for Housing, to reconsider the housing targets for Havant Borough Council. No response has been received.

We are told that a Tournerbury housing development application will come forward in 2023, and the Rook Farm application is ongoing. Without a Local Plan in place, it makes no sense to undertake any further development on the Island unless it is for utilities and services to support the Island's primary role as a leisure destination.

Our argument is that we should just STOP until the infrastructure and flood risks are better understood.

2023 will be a busy year as there are a number of projects which will impact Hayling:

- The new Havant Borough Council Local Plan
- Coastal Partners' Hayling Island Coastal Strategy
- Housing development applications including Rook Farm and Tournerbury.

These projects will require involvement and careful study by all of us to ensure the Council mistakes of the past are not repeated, and the coastal and infrastructure risks now known are visibly recognised by the Council in their planning, together with realistic mitigation and protection solutions including financial plans and funding options. As a start, we are now working on a dossier for the Secretary of State for Housing, highlighting the urgent need for a new flood risk funding process incorporating adaptation which will become essential for our community moving forward.

Dave Parham