

SAVE OUR ISLAND – A NEW WAY FORWARD?

Central Government has recently published a Planning White Paper which reforms the entire Planning Process governing all building and associated infrastructure.

We believe that this revised process will allow Havant Borough Council (HBC) to undo the harm their current plans will impose on the Hayling Island community.

Firstly, Central Government will require all Councils to come forward, inside 30 months' time, with a stripped-down plan zoning all their land as either PROTECTION, GROWTH or RENEWAL.

HBC could and should NOW classify most of the Island as PROTECTION, recognising its importance as the area's major leisure facility and holiday destination – with biking, sailing, surfing, swimming, golfing, walking, holiday and second homes. In addition, a PROTECTION zone would also support the many SSSI sites on the Island land as well as the surrounding harbours, with their bird flight paths and wading bird preservation areas

As the revised housing targets will be “top down”, there is no longer any need for the PUSH group of 12 Hampshire Local Authorities to co-operate on their Local Plans. You may remember this was the start of our problems with the “lowest cost” inappropriate blanket housing growth allocation which is turning the whole area into a substandard housing estate.

There will be a new Design Code Body to inform and assist Local Authorities with the creation of their Local Design Codes. In future HBC will be able to tell Developers in detail what to build rather than the other way round. HBC can legislate for low-energy solutions (balconies for apartment dwellers, solar heating pumps etc. for heating and cooling), mature tree coverage and sustainable surface-water drainage solutions, all meeting environmental standards. Government require these standards to have community input to be valid. We see this as a key role for the Hayling Island Infrastructure Advisory Group.

The disputes with developers over Community Infrastructure Levy contributions will be a thing of the past. Councils will be able to borrow to fund all infrastructure requirements, with Government establishing the payment algorithm.

Those areas zoned RENEWAL will receive automatic pre-approval, but will need to follow all of the Design Code Standards established. These zones would probably include all small ‘windfall’ applications and the Beach Regeneration Proposals. This area will benefit from a new Government “Fast Track For Beauty” recommended by the central Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission.

We would not expect HBC to zone any of the Island as “substantial development.”

We should all encourage our Councillors and HBC to warmly embrace this opportunity to correct the bad decisions of the past, and commence the rezoning of Hayling Island now to hopefully prevent more substandard development continuing in the interim, including the recent controversial infrastructure proposals.

This is a major opportunity for Havant Borough Council to regain the community trust they lost as a result of the Local Plan.

Save Our Island group, as members of the Hayling Island Infrastructure Advisory Group, would welcome the opportunity to contribute towards a revitalised partnership in the interest of all Hayling Island's stakeholders.

Dave Parham
Save Our Island Group