

Portfolio Holder Report – Council 16 April 2014

By Cllr David Guest – Planning and Built Environment

Planning Policy

The Allocations Local Plan is progressing to Examination starting on 29 April in the Council Chamber and is programmed to last 3 days. All the Statements for people appearing at the Examination had to be completed by 4 April. The earliest we will hear from the Inspector after the Examination is likely to be mid June.

'Emsworth Forum' are in the process of seeking designation as the first area in the Borough to qualify to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan. The six week consultation ran from 24 February until 7 April. The Council will then have to consider whether the Emsworth Forum qualify as a Neighbourhood Planning body.

As Housing developments continue to commence the Council is sending out more and more notices for CIL payments. Work on developing spending priorities is being accelerated and further information on options will be brought to Councillors in early summer.

Planning Performance and Planning Contributions

The Government recently published a consultation called "Planning performance and planning contributions". The consultation runs from 23 March to 4 May 2014. In effect the Government are proposing to raise the threshold for designating authorities as under performing, based on the speed of deciding applications for major development. At the moment it is 30% of applications not determined within 13 weeks. It is proposed to raise this to 40%. This is in line with the announcement that was made in the Autumn statement last year. The consultation is also proposing to introduce a 10 unit and 1,000 square metres gross floor space threshold for affordable housing contributions through S106 planning obligations. Our adopted Local Plan threshold is 5 units so this proposal would have an impact.

Building Control

Income for Building Control up to the end of February 2014 was £248,000. This is already higher than the previous year end figure for 2012/13 which was £241,000 with a further month of income still to be generated. This increased income has been achieved with no increased staff resource or cost.

Coastal Management

- **Environment Agency Medium Term Plan Submission**

The Medium Term Plan (MTP) submission for Havant Borough Council has now been submitted to the Environment Agency. This process is normally undertaken in May/ June but was brought forward with only 3 weeks notice for submission, so has involved significant efforts from the team. The process has been brought forward to allow for details of the programme to be included in the Chancellor's 2014 Autumn Statement.

The plan bids for funding for projects and schemes with particular focus on the next 6 years. We have been informed that we will receive a 6 year Capital programme from 2015/16 following this submission, which is a significant change from previous years.

The plan includes a bid for schemes such as the continuing Beach Management at Eastoke, and additional drainage/ access points along the Eastoke prom, and continuation of the environmental studies considering the impact to the bird life within the Solent and future habitat creation sites.

- **Eastoke Point Coastal Defence Works**

The Eastoke Point area performed excellently over the recent stormy period and certainly prevented widespread flooding. Without the scheme in place we would have witnessed a much different scale of Emergency response required. Instead, the flooding experienced was predominantly via the Creek Road car park and water volumes were controlled sufficiently to prevent significant problems arising.

Monitoring of beach movements via GPS surveys is ongoing. At present, the area at the harbour entrance is looking very healthy and previous concerns regarding depletion of the beach profile are not currently evident. The issue of sinkholes where shingle covers the rock structure also continues to be monitored. Fortunately the severe wave climate has helped consolidate the shingle within the rock structure and incidents of sinkhole formation are far less frequent.

We are still negotiating the final contract, but the scheme has been constructed within budget, with all funding coming via Flood Defence Grant in Aid.

- **South Hayling Beach Management Plan**

The beach recycling works were completed this year by the 14th March using one of our Framework Contractors (Les Searle Plant Hire). The recycling works were undertaken earlier than usual due to the continued low beach levels at Eastoke following the winter storms and on going emergency works. In total over 30,000m³ of shingle was recycled from the west Hayling frontage back to Eastoke over a period of 3 weeks. The majority of this shingle was extracted from Gunner Point following successful liaison with Hayling Golf Club who granted access to their land. The total cost of the contractors for the emergency beach works in January and February and the beach recycling contract is over £245,000, all paid for through Environment Agency FDGiA funding. We anticipate to further top up the beach levels at Eastoke using material dredged from the Chichester Harbour entrance channel at some point over the coming months. This would be undertaken by Boskalis Westminster who are the preferred bidder of our short term service contract to maintain the entrance

channel over the next 4 years. Over the next few months we will apply for full planning permission to incorporate the whole south Hayling beach frontage in to our BMP recycling programme, in an effort to manage the frontage in a more efficient and cost effective manner.

- **Winter Storms / Storm Damage**

The winter period has seen an extraordinary frequency of extreme wave condition occurrences. Emergency works were instigated in January, using contractors from our Minor Works Framework and they have been consistently working on site, only recently finishing in mid March. After the first major event at the start of January, the contractors mobilised within two days to provide much needed remedial works to reduce flood risk to our residents.

Working under our approved Beach Management budget, costs for Emergency Works (circa £75k) have been met from Flood Defence Grant in Aid after successfully bidding for contingency funding due to the extreme conditions.

Delivery of the recent Eastoke Point Scheme certainly prevented serious flooding to the area and negated the need for any beach recycling works to be undertaken on that part of our frontage. Feedback from residents has been excellent, at a time when they could see regular national news items reporting public frustration due to lack of support or communication.

Other assets within the Borough witnessed damage due to the weather and a separate bid for Emergency funding has been collated and submitted to the Environment Agency. The main asset in question is the Broadmarsh revetment that currently protects a landfill area, where several failures put the remaining structure at risk. Contractors have already been appointed and a business case for Emergency Funding submitted (circa £100k) to support the wider bid. We are awaiting a decision on this funding.

Development Management

Major Developments – Progress update

Residential schemes

Woodcroft Farm, Eagle Avenue, Cowplain

An application proposing a development of 293 residential units comprising 6 x one bedroom, 115 x two bedroom, 132 x three bedroom and 40 x four bedroom houses with the retention of existing farmhouse and a new access road from Eagle Avenue was considered at the meeting of the Development Management Committee (DMC) held on 23 January. Members resolved to grant permission subject to a S106 agreement securing a range of contributions.

Copseys Nursery/Manor Farm, Havant

Work is progressing on the delivery of houses across the site. Early difficulties with construction traffic accessing the site in breach of the Construction Management Plan have been resolved following improved communication between the developers and the local community.

Land to west of London Road, Purbrook (part of MDA)

A Reserved Matters application for 246 residential dwellings which comprise phase 2 of the Berewood development within the West of Waterlooville MDA development, (within HBC boundaries) was submitted recently and will be reported to the DMC in the near future.

Land south of Scratchface Lane, Havant

The Reserved Matters approval application for 92 dwellings was approved in October 2013. The pre-commencement conditions have now been discharged and work has recently commenced on site.

Goldring Close, Hayling Island

Discussions are underway with prospective developers (Bellway Homes) in advance of the submission of a Reserved Matters application.

Commercial schemes

Dunsbury Hill Farm - 61,000sqm mixed B1, B2 & B8 plus 95 bed hotel/conference facility

Formal planning permission has now been issued following completion of a complex S106 Agreement between the Borough and County Council's and Portsmouth City Council. Work on discharging the pre-commencement planning conditions is progressing with the key ecology conditions approved which will enable the granting of a protected species licence from Natural England which is required before the necessary tree felling can take place close to the site entrance. Works on the site entrance could commence as early as May and the improvement works to the 'ASDA' roundabout at Purbrook Way/Hulbert Road are expected to start later in the year.

BAE site, Waterlooville - mixed redevelopment

An application proposing a mixed-use employment, leisure and retail development involving the demolition of main building and the erection of a hotel, cinema, three restaurants, a public house, a drive-thru restaurant, a foodstore and the retention of existing buildings for use as either offices or conversion to a bowling complex/health and fitness centre & restaurant was considered in December. Work on the s106 Agreement is concluding and the formal permission will be issued in the very near future.

Solent Trade Park, Solent Road, Havant

Construction work has recently been completed on Units 1 and 2 of the redeveloped Solent Trade Park site, which will allow for the relocation of Emsworth Mould Polishers and Havant Motor Factors to new, purpose-built premises. Work is now underway on phase 2 of the development which will complete the regeneration of the site.

Sainsbury's site, Waterlooville

We have been advised that work will commence on the new retail store in April 2014.

Planning appeals decisions

Merok House Rest and Convalescent Home – an application to extend the existing home was refused by the Development Management Committee at a meeting held in September 2013 due to concerns about the impact of the development on the amenities of adjacent residents. The Inspector concluded that whilst the proposal would lead to some loss of sunlight during the winter months to neighbouring property, he considered that given the relatively limited period in which this would occur that any harm would not be significant and did not warrant the refusal of the appeal.

West of Waterlooville Major Development Area

At its meeting held on 19 February 2014 the Council resolved to set up a Joint West of Waterlooville Major Development Area Planning Committee with Winchester City Council. This is subject to Winchester City Council agreeing and they are reporting to meetings of their Planning Development Control Committee on 27 March and to their Council meeting on 2 April 2014. The terms of reference of the Joint Committee were considered at the meeting of the DMC held on 27 March 2014.

Planning workloads

The Development Management team are continuing to receive a high workload, particularly of major planning applications and pre-application enquiries. Planning application fee income is again significantly ahead of budget, reflecting the number of major proposals under consideration.