

PLANNING, HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Accompanying a Planning Application for repair and raising of sea boundary walls and new wall/replacement gates, Swan House

At
66 Bath Road
Emsworth
Hampshire
PO10 7ES



on behalf of
Mr R Bailey
July 2014

GENESIS
TOWN PLANNING

PLANNING | REGENERATION | ENVIRONMENT

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1 This Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr R Bailey and accompanies a planning application for a new low wall and replacement gates on the Bath Road frontage and upgrading, repair and refurbishment of the existing sea walls surrounding the site.
- 1.2 Pre-application discussion has taken place on site with Steve Lawrence of the Chichester Harbour Conservancy. This was a positive meeting, with Mr Lawrence having no objection in principle to the proposal, subjective to the submission of the required documentation and supporting information.
- 1.3 The application site is within the Emsworth settlement boundary and the Emsworth Conservation Area. An Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB) abuts the sea defences. There is a Site of Important Nature Conservation (SINC) within the watercourse beyond the site and the site is within Flood Zone 3.
- 1.3 The application comprises:
- Location Plan: Drawing No. 14047-10
 - Proposed and Existing Front Boundary (West elevation): Drawing No.14047-02
 - Proposed and Existing South and East elevations: Drawing No. 14047-01
 - Method Statement
 - Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement (Genesis Town Planning)
 - Flood Risk Assessment
 - Photographs
 - Biodiversity Checklist

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

A Application Site

- 2.1 The application site is comprised of residential curtilage at the southern end of a peninsula, lying to the east of Bath Road with the rear garden/sea walls abutting the Mill Pond and the wider expanse of the harbour watercourse beyond. The principle elevation of the dwelling faces Bath Road. The existing sea walls are in eroded and in state of disrepair and as such are not currently fulfilling their function in terms of protecting the site from flooding.



Fig 1 Swan House

- 2.2 In planning terms, the site falls within the various designations identified at paragraph 1.2. The site is also subject to Policy DM9 Development in the Coastal Zone along with various other relevant policies, as discussed within Section 4 of this report.

B The Surroundings

- 2.3 The locality comprises two storey dwellings within relatively large plots along either side of the peninsula, beyond the main centre of Emsworth. There is a large car/boat park directly south of the property. The variety and condition of retaining walls in the vicinity is very diverse, with use of a varied palette of materials and painted render in evidence.
- 2.4 The Mill Pond beyond the sea walls which bound the site at the east is enclosed by The Promenade Wall. The Mill Pond is classified as a main river and administrated by the Council as a local amenity.
- 2.5 The Council sets out the flooding issues for the Mill Pond on its website, stating that:

Flooding is most likely to occur when the water level in Chichester Harbour is higher than the main weir, and waves have been breaking over the promenade. In these conditions the Mill Pond becomes part of the harbour and the Mill Pond water levels cease to be affected by the promenade wall and weirs. However, flooding at Bridge Road in September 1995, September 2000 and November 2010 has shown that this is not always the case if the West Brook is in high flow - on these occasions there was little or no flooding in Bath Road or Bridgefoot Path adjoining the Mill Pond.

The worst combination at any time and especially over the five-day period at each Spring Tide is:

- *prolonged heavy rainfall*
- *wind greater than gale force from the south to south-east*
- *low barometric pressure*

This combination is likely to give rise to flooding due to surface water run-off in and around Bridge Road, Bath Road, Bridgefoot Path and Victoria Road, with extensive flooding due to the tidal surge affecting the same areas together with the lower end of South Street and of the A259 Havant Road

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

A Site History

- 3.1 Recent planning applications beyond the dwelling itself pertain to trees works. When the sea walls themselves were last upgraded is not apparent, although it is likely to have been at least 30 or 40 years ago.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 The relevant policy considerations are contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and Practice guidance (March 2014) and Development Plan policy in the Havant Core Strategy (adopted 2011). Saved policies from the Local Plan (1995) also form part of the development plan. The Emsworth Conservation Area Appraisal and the Council's Flood Risk Strategy are also pertinent.

A National Policy Guidance (NPPF)

- 4.2 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In terms of decision making, local planning authorities should approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 4.3 Paragraph 131 states that in determining planning applications local authorities should take account of:

The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 4.4 Paragraph 137 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the settings of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.
- 4.5 Section 7 encourages good design as a key aspect of sustainable development. Section 10 addresses climate change, flooding and coastal change. It states that in coastal areas, local planning authorities should reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or adding to the impacts of physical changes to the coast and be clear as to what development will be appropriate in such areas and in what circumstances.

B Development Plan and other Relevant Policy

- 4.6 Policies from the Havant Borough District-wide Local Plan (2005) are being superseded by the emerging Local Plan. The Havant Borough Core Strategy was adopted in March 2011. Saved policies from the 2005 Local Plan currently still apply in tandem with Core Strategy policies and will eventually be replaced by the Development Delivery (allocations) Plan Policies, anticipated summer 2014.

Flood Risk

- 4.7 The Council's Flood Defence Policy (2013) sets how the Council will meet the Government's aims and objectives to reduce risk to people and the environment from flood and coastal erosion. The Mill Pond is identified as a main river and as such is the responsibility of the Environment Agency.
- 4.8 Objective B of the Policy is:
- ‘To encourage the provision of adequate, economically, technically and environmentally sound and sustainable flood and coastal defence measures’.
- 4.9 Saved Policy F1 of the Havant Local plan deals with development in areas at risk from tidal flooding and coastal erosion, although is more concerned with extensions and more major development than flood defence. Policy F3 Flood Defence and Coast

Protection Works states that new and replacement flood defence works will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- they are not obtrusive or damaging to the coastal landscape;
- protects features of nature and archaeological significance
- do not disrupt coastal or river processes so people, property, wildlife or archaeology are put at risk from flooding/erosion
- consistent with Shoreline Management Plan and associated Strategy Plans.

- 4.10 Within the Council's Core Strategy, policy CS15 on flood and coastal erosion risk has a similar thrust to saved Policy F1.

Heritage and Design

- 4.11 Saved Policy C3 of Local Plan deals with development in the coastal zone/. HE16 deals with the Conservation of Heritage Assets.
- 4.12 Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough, policy C12 considers protection of the Chichester Harbour AONB and its setting; CS12 seeks high quality design. Policy DM9 deals with Development in the Coastal Zone.
- 4.13 The Emsworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2010) sets out the special interest of the Conservation Area and provides design guidance on development and alterations to ensure its character and appearance are preserved or enhanced. The house itself is identified in the Emsworth Conservation Area Appraisals as a building which makes a positive contribution.

In terms of the immediate area it states:

'At the southern end, it is retained by The Promenade, which acts as a harbour wall and walkway between the Quay and the south end of Bath Road, where the Emsworth Sailing Club is situated. Although most of the 19th and 20th century development surrounding is recessive in character, at about its mid-point three buildings occupy prominent positions and provide focal points of views from around the Mill Pond, namely the Malt house and the Slipper Mill on the Quay and a house on the opposite side of the water, No 66 Bath Lane'.

5.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL AND RECOMMENDATION

A The Development Proposal

- 5.1 The proposal is for the replacement of existing gates on the Bath Road (West elevation) with gates and brick piers of the same height and a low brick wall. The brickwork will match that of the existing garage which the low wall will adjoin. On the south and east boundaries of the site the existing sea wall loose block work will be repaired and the walls will be raised minimally, finished in natural render. Approximately 80% of the existing fabric will be retained. A flood gate will be installed adjacent to the garage at the north of the site.

B Flood Risk

- 5.2 The very minor works are proposed to alleviate flooding issues and improve the appearance of the sea walls, which are currently in state of disrepair and decline, with water ingress taking place throughout. A full structural survey has been undertaken to ascertain the level of works required to secure existing fabric and ascertain the minimum level of additional height required.



Fig 2 Eroded sea walls

- 5.3 The need for the scheme is set out in full within the Flood Risk Assessments. In summary, the existing sea walls have a limited life expectancy and are currently not functioning to protect Swan House and the garden from flood risk. The clear benefits of addressing flood risk at this location are multiple, in terms of improving the network of sea defences along this part of the coast, protecting a non-statutory heritage asset (Swan House) within the Conservation Area and improving the appearance of sea walls at a visually sensitive location. The proposals are compliant with the Council's flood risk strategy and relevant national and local policy.

C Layout and Character, Design and Scale

- 5.4 The character of an area is derived from the layout and form of prevailing development, the design and use of materials, the density of surrounding development and its relationship with the surrounding watercourses. The proposal does not essentially alter the layout or form of the existing walls/gates and will improve the appearance of these structures to the benefit of local character and distinctiveness. Any rise in height will be minor and would not result in a visual intrusion in terms of views in and out of the site. Materials will be consistent with the existing and use of natural render for the sea walls will provide a degree of uniformity, whilst still maintaining a natural, organic appearance which will various types and styles of retaining walls in the vicinity.

D Landscaping, Trees and Ecology

- 5.5 The Method Statement accompanying this application sets out how the Weeping Willow to the north east of the site (2.7m from the boundary) will not be damaged by the works. All trees on the site will be maintained. The works required to repair and raise the existing sea walls will be sensitively undertaken by hand, there will be no disturbance to existing nearby habitats as a result of the proposed works.

E Heritage Assets

- 5.6 The site is within the Emsworth Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset. As such, the impact on the setting of the heritage asset is a consideration. The condition

of the existing sea walls is extremely poor, both in terms of functionality and appearance. As such, the repair and improvement of the walls on the east and south boundaries will improve the discernible buffer between the Conservation Area and the watercourse beyond. The minor rise in height would not be intrusive in terms of views in and out of the Conservation Area and the overall consolidation of the walls would improve the appearance of the site, thus ensuring the character and appearance of the heritage asset is preserved.

- 5.7 With respect to the replacement of gates and low wall on the Bath Road elevation, replacement with gates and brick piers of the same height will not impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Use of brick to match the existing garage will enhance the streetscene.

F Amenity

- 5.8 The proposal will not impact on the amenity of local residents, the site itself being largely removed from other residential properties. The closest properties on Bath Road are screened by extensive vegetation. Moreover, the changes to the western (Bath Road) boundary are minor, with the introduction of a dwarf wall and replacement gates of the same height as existing, improving the visual appearance of the streetscene and making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.
- 5.9 Visual amenity in respect of views across the harbour will not be impacted upon with the slight raise in height of the sea walls. The visual appearance of the buffer between land and the watercourse will in fact be improved by the rationalisation of the existing fabric, currently comprised of a mix of materials and in varying states of disrepair throughout. A degree of uniformity, whilst maintaining a natural render finish to the boundary walls will improve the appearance of the walls, allow natural weathering and improve the experience of views across the harbour and along Bath Road.

G Car Parking and Highways

- 5.10 Highways and car parking will not be impacted upon as a result of the proposal.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

- 5.11 In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities should approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The proposal entirely fulfils Objective 4 of the Council's Flood Defence Policy by providing technically sound and sustainable flood defence. As such, the proposals brings multiple benefits in terms of tempering flood risk and coastal erosion which is currently causing on-going exposure of Swan house to flooding. The minor works required to repair and raise the sea walls would alleviate these issues and improve the appearance of the walls, which are currently in state of disrepair and decline, allowing water ingress around the site. The proposals will also enhancing the appearance of the walls, which is beneficial to the character of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 5.12 We trust therefore your Council will be able to grant planning permission within the minimum determination period.