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FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

Proposal: PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 1 No. 2 BEDROOM TOURISM RELATED DETACHED PROPERTY INCLUDING GROUND FLOOR CAR AND BOAT STORAGE FACILITY AND UTILISING EXISTING ACCESS TO EASTOKE AVENUE -
responding to Planning Appeal decision APP/X1735/A/10/2119630

Site: 14 FISHERMANS WALK, EASTOKE, HAYLING ISLAND, PO11 9QU

Introduction

The application site - 14 Fishermans Walk is located on the north shore of Eastoke peninsula overlooking Chichester Harbour. The site previously contained a dwelling the ruins of which were finally removed by the applicant in 2006. The site other than its immediate neighbours at 10, 12 and 16 Fishermans Walk is set in a large area of tourist caravans and mobile homes all of which are single storey. The height above sea level of the application site is 2.9 m AOD although the site is currently protected by a modern sea wall which has been upgraded to protect to a height of 3.61 m AOD.

Planning Appeal decision **APP/X1735/A/10/2119630** dated 9 December 2010 [paragraphs 15, 16 &20] considered flood risk as a main issue with the Inspector concluding that because the site which has an extant Caravan Site Licence could be occupied by single storey living accommodation at a lower level than the predicted extreme tidal event its replacement with first floor living accommodation at a higher level than the extreme tidal event the safety risk to occupiers would be reduced. The Inspector was anxious to avoid the possibility of a caravan being sited at the appeal location in addition to the development which led to the grounds for dismissing the appeal. To avoid the most severe winter conditions the Inspector advised that occupation of the new development should be restricted to dates between 1 February and 30 November each year.

Research and consultations

An assessment of the Environment Agency web site confirms that the building is located within a Flood Zone Coastal Flooding area with a **low to moderate** likelihood of experiencing a flooding event [i.e. 1.3% (1 in 75) or less but greater than 0.5% (1 in 200) with these figures taking into account existing sea flood defences]. By referring to the

Environment Agency Flood Maps and Annex D of PPS25 it appears that the application property is located in a Zone 2 - 3a Flood Zone.

The PPG25 - 2060 predicted flood level for this location was 3.7 AOD which would have been unlikely to have caused a flooding incident due to the protecting effect of the sea wall defences. Residents in this area are aware that occasional overtopping of the sea defences may occur in some storm conditions but the harbour coastline is to a significant degree protected by the peninsula land to the south. PPS25 suggests a predicted flood level in 2115 of 4.4 AOD for Chichester Harbour. The application site is protected by an existing Southern Water sea wall giving effective protection to 3.61 m AOD. Under the previous PPG25 it had been established that with the present harbour defences they would provide adequate sea defence other than, perhaps, in certain extreme low pressure weather situations coinciding with 'spring tides'.

PPS25 however has set an increased predicted flood level of 0.7 m rising to 4.4 m AOD by 2115. It seems apparent that if this level is to be experienced significant and widespread reinforcement and lifting of the sea and harbour defences must be undertaken by the responsible Authority's.

AOD levels in the proximity of the application site

A topographical study of the application site is illustrated on Drawing No. 0655-316/0 which confirms an effective sea wall height of 3.61 m AOD with a site level of 2.9 m AOD.

The Sequential Test

PPS25 which was examined in considerable detail by the Inspector at the Planning Appeal Hearing aims to steer new development to areas of lowest probability to flood - namely D1 - Flood Zone 1 areas. This application site lies between two existing two storey dwellings both of which having living accommodation at ground floor level.

This proposal is of a different character to that the subject of previous development proposals for the site. Permanent family residential occupation is no longer being pursued and the proposal is now intended to support the tourism policies of the Local Planning Authority. Occupation of the proposed building will be managed and of a short term nature on a self catering or bed and breakfast basis. In addition to its tourist offer all living accommodation will be at first floor level and with two bedrooms the property is expected to have a maximum occupancy of three persons.

The Environment Agency Flood Maps appear to indicate the application property to be within a Zone 2/3a area with a 'low to moderate risk' possibility of tidal flooding affecting the property.

Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification

Table D.2 of PPS25 clarifies that **caravans and mobile homes** fall within the **highly vulnerable** classification but as this proposal relates to a first floor tourist holiday facility its classification falls within the **more vulnerable** sector which also includes **dwelling houses**. According to Table D.2 of PPS25 the proposed related use has flood safety benefits over and above that of caravans, mobile homes and dwelling houses.

The predicted over-topping of the sea defences with changing weather patterns could well occur at any time of year and with the accommodation being at first floor level the occupants would be at a level between 0.6 & 0.8 m above the predicted high tide level. It must be recognised that expected tidal flooding events are unlikely to occur without a great deal of media involvement through television and radio announcements. Floodline would be a further source of warning. Tidal flooding is of a significantly different nature to that of alluvium flooding which can and often starts as a 'flash flooding event'.

Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment

The application proposal is to construct a two storey building with all living accommodation at first floor level which is set at 5.2 m AOD. The ground floor will be partly enclosed for the storage of boats and cars by those temporarily using the building. The slipway facility is a particular plus factor in marketing the property for holiday tourist purposes.

Safe access and exit - evacuation plan

The applicant currently resides next door in 16 Fishermans Walk and intends to manage the occupancy of the proposed building. It would be his intention to take advantage of Floodline and flood warning announcements provided by the media and then to appropriately advise the temporary occupants. Notwithstanding these points of information, the likelihood of a serious tidal flooding event it is suggested will be observable by high winds, storm conditions, darkness and barometer low pressure warnings. Following telephone contact with the emergency services a decision would need to be made on the most sensible escape solution for the applicants and the occupants safety.

Conclusion

This proposal is made in response to Appeal decision **APP/X1735/A/10/2119630** and Havant Borough Councils previous refusals for the construction of a new dwelling. The proposal is to provide a two storey building with all living accommodation at first floor level. The building is now proposed as a facility attractive to tourism and holidaymakers with slipway boating access into Chichester Harbour. The physical form of the proposed development is significantly safer than that of a caravan or mobile home and consequently also respects Havant Borough Wide Local Plan tourism policies.

The applicants have noted the guidance identified in PPS25 and will be further guided by the Environment Agency in connection with this Flood Risk Assessment.

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cc. Mr Oliver Lund