



Save Our Shore



Newsletter

ISSUE NO. 1 • JAN 2020

Langstone residents oppose unfit flood defence plans

More than 130 concerned residents have registered their support for a campaign opposing proposed coastal defences during a meeting at historic Langstone village, in Hampshire.

Hosted by the recently formed “Save Our Shore” (SOS) action group, the meeting explained how the East Solent Coastal Partnership (ESCP) is championing its preferred development option for flood defences on Langstone’s shoreline - even though stakeholder meetings have made it clear the proposals are unacceptable.

In an open forum, multiple residents spoke about the many unaddressed concerns over the scheme’s suitability in terms of effectiveness, recreational access and aesthetics within the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The **Save Our Shore** campaign issued a statement which said: “As they are spending an allocated £376,000 of public money, we’re asking ESCP and Havant Borough Council to reconsider these unacceptable plans as their preferred option and to get more residents involved so they can have their say before a further £450,000 is

spent finalising detailed plans. After that the scheme will cost millions to build and runs a huge risk of failing in its aims.

“Of course, everyone in Langstone village and the wider Havant area appreciates the need for coastal defences but we feel a real duty to ensure that the plan is absolutely right. We’re talking about protecting centuries of history in this unique environment for the next 100 years and we believe there are much better solutions to be explored.”

The ESCP is currently planning drop-in sessions in early January at which its preferred plans could be viewed but previous sessions were poorly attended due to insufficient publicity. This resulted in minimal public engagement. As a result, the SOS group decided to hold its own meeting to provide a robust means of measuring true majority opinion with the aim of stopping the wrong plan going forward as a *fait accompli*.



Full house at Sailig Club

The SOS group is asking for the drop-in sessions to be postponed indefinitely whilst it seeks a meeting with elected representatives to secure the future of the village against the damage of current proposals.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the plans so far can view a PDF with information as well as before and after illustrations at: www.soslangstone.org

Created by the SOS group with information provided so far by ESCP, the document shows how the proposed defences will restrict sea views, detract from historic buildings and limit access to the foreshore.

Mark's *view* from both sides of the A3023

1.2 Mtr wall around Langstone

Langstone in Hampshire, is a tranquil and beautiful yet dynamic area, with wildlife, 14 miles of Langstone Harbour Waterside Walks and great communications to London by rail as well as direct access to Chichester, Portsmouth and Petersfield.

It is a simple decision to move to Langstone!

Flooding and flood defences have been a way of life for some of the houses in Langstone with some minor battles with sea defences at extreme high tides over the years.

Havant Borough Council, via ESCP, have concluded that the only way

forward for Langstone is to place a 1.2 mtr wall around the shoreline to protect against rising tides of the future.

Views from the Royal Oak would be blocked, Langstone High Street would have huge flood gate defences blighting it and HBC are happy for this to go ahead.

Save our Shore (SOS) has been set up by local residents to explore and discuss with the Government alternative solutions that would be more in keeping with the local environment.

Mark Effenberg, a Langstone



Mark Effenberg

resident for over 12 years has lived on both Langstone High Street and subsequently off Mill Lane, has joined SOS to help campaign for alternative solutions.

Mark said 'the ESCP vision for Langstone is totally at odds with the wishes of so many of the Langstone residents and its vital that we make our voice heard with alternative solutions'.

When *planners* get it wrong!

Back in 1963 a certain Dr Beeching prescribed a severe pruning of the National Railway system which included the axing of the Hayling Billy line between Havant and West Town Hayling.

With hindsight, the existing and future planned housing development on Hayling makes a mockery of the closure of the Billy line. The existing A3023 is very near saturation point with almost no viable options available to ease congestion.

It just goes to show that the "planners" are not always right, that time can prove them wrong. What would they give for the Billy to be operational now!

This time ten years ago there were no ipads, no selfie sticks, no Greggs vegan sausage rolls and no Ubers - to name just a few changes!



A Terrier locomotive that worked the Billy Line, small and light enough for the shakey wooden bridge.

Exactly the same with the proposed Langstone flood defences. Governments have recognised the problems of climate change and are slowly reacting: eg. electric cars, planting trees, banning gas in new housing, etc etc. Who's to say what will be the situation in 30/50 years time.

This is why as a possible alternative to ESCP's plans we are suggesting that they repair existing defences and reconsider, in conjunction with residents, the best way forward. Flood defences are vital, but with a cost of millions let's get it right first time.

We have learned the lesson from the axing of the "Billy" we don't want to make a similar mistake with the Langstone flood defences.

Ask our MP to act...

The Government, of which our local MP Alan Mak is a member, has recently earmarked one million pounds in an effort to reverse the increasing trend of local pubs closing.



Alan Mak MP

They, the Government, have recognised that in many cases the "local" is the only place where the community meet, talk, have a bite to eat and enjoy each others company. With an ageing population and closures of many Post Offices, bank branches, shops etc the "local pub" is taking on an even more important role in the fabric of our society.

Residents of Langstone are extremely fortunate in having the choice of two great "locals" - The Ship and the Royal Oak which have for centuries served the needs of both residents and many thousands of tourists. However, how long this will continue for is in some doubt and depends on exactly what Eastern Solent Coastal Partnership ESCP, working on behalf of Havant Borough Council, decide is their "preferred" flood defence scheme for Langstone.

ESCP presentations of their preferred flood defence scheme for the Royal Oak and adjacent cottages favour building a four foot two inches wall on top of the quay, which in the view of **Save our Shore (SOS)** has the potential of making the Royal Oak commercially unviable and possibly lead to another pub closure.

To understand just how much the Royal Oak relies on the existing "open" quay just look at the photo attached taken at lunch time on Christmas Day 2019. Locals standing and sitting on the quay,



The Royal Oak Christmas Day 2019

children on the foreshore, enjoying the heritage and environment of an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Just imagine the picture with a 4 foot plus wall built on the edge of the quay - significantly fewer if any people!

It's ironic that it is Government funds, £376,000, campaigned for by our local MP, Alan Mak, that has bought about this unforeseen situation. Certainly not, we are sure, what the Government intended when announcing their incentive to save local pubs.

Concerns for The Royal Oak are a metaphor for Langstone. It cannot be right that a programme of protection includes an element of destruction. It is however not too

late to save the situation, it just needs the residents and friends of Langstone to voice their concerns by telling our MP that the preferred option of ESCP is NOT the preferred option of the people who live in Langstone.

It is important to act now before ESCP draw down another £450,000 to progress their "preferred option". It's your money so have your say, Email **Alan Mak** today at: alanm@alanmak.org.uk

It would be helpful if you could copy in your email to Alan Mak to bishopspinters@btclick.com, thank you.

Some of the many questions HBC and ESCP need to answer

1)

Why has ESCP engaged a £22 billion USA firm to progress Langstone flood defences instead of one of many suitable locally based firms?

2)

How has ESCP spent the first £376000 – with whom and how will they be spending the next £450000. Has tendering taken place?

3)

ESCP estimate a total cost of £6.9 million to complete Langstone flood defences. How much has been raised so far and where and when will the balance come from?

4)

Who do ESCP report to ?

5)

Has any report been commissioned on the commercial effect ESCPs plans will have on the Royal Oak?

6)

If the wall on the quay is 4 foot plus how will disabled people in wheelchairs and children view Chichester Harbour?

7)

When do you expect sea levels to be such that your intended defences will be required?

8)

Why does the ESCP website show an image of the Royal Oak wall about 24inches above footpath level and a diagram showing it as about 50 inches above the path. Which one is correct?



Conservation; protection of natural resources and the environment.

Extract from Langstone Conservation Review, Character Appraisal and Management Plan

5.4 Views and Vistas

"The whole of the foreshore of the village is open to public access and views in and out across the harbour are consequently an integral and important element of the character of Langstone."

The nature of these harbour views fluctuates with the state of the tide, with large tracts of inter-tidal land being exposed at low water, but whatever the state of the tide, the sense of space is the overriding impression. Although Hayling Island road bridge represents a significant man made element, the views generally represent a natural scene with tree screens masking the marina and hotel development on the north shore of Hayling Island.

The Northern shoreline of the harbour between Langstone and Emsworth is remarkably unspoilt by development. When viewed from Langstone Bridge or Hayling Island, Langstone still represents the appearance of a small hamlet set within a rural hinterland. Indeed the attractive juxtaposition of these small domestic buildings, terminating in the Old Mill to the east, is an attractive focal point of these views. Trees form an important backdrop and an essential ingredient to the setting of the conservation area.

From the western end of Langstone Hight Street views are contained by the buildings outward towards the harbour. The presence of the shoreline and harbour is not immediately apparent but unfolds on the approach.

Views in and out of the harbour, natural scene, small domestic buildings, all could be lost behind a four foot plus wall and a semi industrial type boardwalk between The Ship and The Royal Oak if ESCP go ahead with their preferred options !! They need to look again at the definition of Conservation – what will they be leaving our grandchildren?