

Planning Statement

Replacement Sea Defences at
Nº 3 Manchester Road Netley Abbey

For
Mr and Mrs M Caulkin



Courtesy of Google Maps

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Statement supports a planning application for the proposed replacement of gabion sea defences at 3 Manchester Road, Netley Abbey. Gabions are wire cages filled with stone.
- 1.2 The Statement commences with the site location and description, and the proposed development. It refers to the planning history of the property, to relevant planning policy and to matters of design and access.
- 1.4 The existing sea defences have been gradually decaying over the years. The storms Eunice and Franklin, which occurred in February 2022, have caused further erosion to the sea defences at the rear of Nº 3 Manchester Road. The proposed works are now more urgent. It is hoped that planning permission may be obtained so that works can proceed in 2023.
- 1.5 The application is supported by the following plans and reports:

Plans and Engineering drawing	Cowan Consultancy
Ecological Impact Assessment	ECOSA
Habitat Regulations assessment	
Biodiversity Net Gain	
Arboricultural Development Statement	CBA
Planning Statement	BJC Planning
Photographs of the Site	
Landscape Perspectives	Detailed Planting Plan
Topographic survey	J Brotherton and Partners

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Netley Abbey lies within the Parish of Hound on the northeast bank of Southampton Water to the north of the Royal Victoria Country Park. The site is situated at 3 Manchester Road Netley Abbey adjoining the waterfront on Southampton Water.
- 2.2 Manchester Road is a relatively short road lying to the southwest of Victoria Road. It forms loop with York Road from Victoria Road to the coast and back to Victoria Road. The property Nº 3 is a chalet bungalow adjoining a two storey property Nº 3a which is to the north west. Access to Nº 3 from Manchester Road is to the side of Nº 3a.
- 2.3 The rear garden of Nº 3 extends to the waterfront where there is a significant change in level (7.0-8.0m) down to the beach. It is the boundary of the property with the beach which is being addressed by the proposed development.

- 2.4 The owners have recently landscaped the garden to Nº 3 but have excluded the end near the cliff. The central part of the garden is laid to grass with some decking on the south-eastern side. (See Photograph 2). There are also some trees on the south-eastern side of the garden.
- 2.5 The boundary of the property with the beach is currently protected by some gabions which are a popular boundary treatment in the area, as they provide the necessary defences against the sea. However, with the passage of time these defences need to be replaced. (See Photographs 6, 7 and 8).
- 2.6 The cliffs along this part of Southampton Water vary in height and gradually reduce in a northward direction. The cliffs are composed of a stratum of sand topped with a further stratum of a conglomerate of coarser sand and gravel. (See Photographs 3 and 4). These materials are readily erodible and thus are protected by sea defences mainly in the form of gabions.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The development proposes the replacement of the existing gabions which are now showing signs of wear and tear. The proposed replacement structure is shown on the plans accompanying this application. It is proposed to construct the entire defence of the cliff in stone filled gabions.
- 3.2 The storms in recent years, such as Storm Eunice last winter, have had an increased erosive effect upon the length of cliff along this part of Southampton Water. The storms and high tides have gradually broken the existing stone gabions and eroded the soft sedimentary rock which forms the cliffs.
- 3.2 The two photographs below taken last January and January this year illustrate the effects of this constant erosion.



Photograph of Cliff taken 24th January 2022



Photograph of Cliff taken 11th January 2023

4.0 Planning History

4.1 The planning history of the site is limited.

- 4.2 In 1988 planning application Z/29650/002/00 proposed Extension and conversion to form two dwellings. This was granted permission on 13th December 1988.
- 4.3 Application T/19/86626 gained consent in December 2019 for '2 no Oaks (T2 & T4) Crown raise by up to 10 metres to keep in line with the other trees along the seafront'.
- 4.4 More recently an application H/19/86763 sought Extension to side dormer and alterations to fenestration. This was granted permission on 20th February 2020.
- 4.5 In 2021 application NC/21/90472 provided notification to fell a holm oak. No objection was raised on 16th June 2021 and the tree has been removed.

Pre-application Consultation

- 4.6 In September 2022 a pre-application submission was made to the Council Officers for sea defences which incorporated sleeper walls below the gabions to provide additional protection for the cliff. Officers expressed concern about the height of this sleeper wall and sought justification for the height. Following discussions with the contractor it has now been decided to dispense with the sleeper wall and to rely entirely on the gabions.
- 4.7 The pre-application proposals also included a ladder to facilitate access from the garden to the beach. This too has been dropped from the proposals.
- 4.8 The pre-application response confirmed that the application required the support of an arboriculturist's report. This has now been obtained and accompanies the application.
- 4.9 The ecologist consultee sought additional information on the treatment of the end of the garden in proximity to the cliff edge where it is considered that there should be appropriate planting to encourage biodiversity. The proposals now include a submission which addresses net biodiversity gain. The proposals have been discussed with the Council's ecologist and are illustrated on a detailed planting plan which is submitted with this application.
- 4.10 The pre-application feedback reported that the Conservation Officer had raised no objection to the proposed sea defence works.

5.0 Planning Policy

Local Plan

- 5.1 Planning policy in Eastleigh Borough is set out in the Local Plan. Eastleigh Borough Council has recently adopted a new Local Plan.

Strategic Policy S7 The Coast

- 5.2 This policy addresses the coastal resources, functions, pressures and need for protection. At paragraph 2e it states:

The Council therefore seeks to:

e. achieve coast protection and flood management measures where necessary in accordance with the adopted North Solent Shoreline Management Plan (see policy DM7, Chapter 5).

- 5.3 Paragraph 4.36 references the crumbling cliffs at Netley;

The character of the coastline ranges from low, crumbling cliffs at Netley to the open mudflats and marshes of the estuary and the more enclosed upper tidal reaches of the River Hamble, which is tidal as far north as Botley. There is some slow erosion of the cliffs at Netley which provides opportunities for the sandstone cliffs to be colonised by rare mining bee and wasp colonies.

Development Management Policy DM7 Flood defences, land reclamation and coast protection

- 5.4 Policy DM7 addresses issues of coastal protection. It states, *inter alia*,

Flood defence and coast protection works will be permitted provided that they accord with the approved management plans.

The approved management plans are:

- **The North Solent Shoreline Management Plan**
- **The Environment Agency's Catchment Flood Management Plan and**
- **The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Eastleigh Borough Surface Water Management Plan.**

- 5.5 Paragraph 5.41 of the Local Plan recognises the problems of coastal erosion, citing Netley. It says:

Parts of the Borough's coastline are subject to slow erosion, particularly along the shores of Southampton Water. For example, the low cliffs fronting Netley are retreating gradually. Lower lying areas around Hamble are also susceptible to inundation from the sea, which is likely to worsen with sea-level rise. The North Solent Shoreline Management Plan identifies the areas likely to be affected by both erosion and flooding over the years 2005-2105.

5.6 Further reference to the erosion of the cliffs at Netley is made a paragraph 6.2.60. At paragraph 6.2.67 the main issue in Hound Parish, in which Netley falls, is:

- Coastal erosion along the Netley village and Royal Victoria Country Park frontages.

North Solent Shoreline Management Plan

5.7 This plan was published in 2010 and provides a strategy for the entire length of the North Solent Shoreline. The Summary Report addresses privately owned and maintained defences at section 4. It provides advice to householders on the management of their sea defences. It also highlights the role of the document in the development management process, confirming that the plan is not legally enforceable but may be useful in the decision making of Planning Officers.

5.8 The shoreline management plan identifies policies in respect defence of the coastline. These are : hold the line, advance the line, managed realignment and no active intervention. For the coast in the vicinity of Netley village the policy is to 'hold the line'. This means that defences should be maintained or upgraded. The policy does not indicate that there is public funding for the works and so it is left to the landowner to fund works.

5.9 The following extract examines the role of private landowners in the defence of the coast from erosion.

Private landownership

Around most of England, although the coast is often privately-owned, public authorities have traditionally managed the coastline. In the North Solent SMP area over 60% of the shoreline is privately-owned and the majority has privately maintained defences. Therefore, private landowners have a key role in the way the shoreline is and will be managed within the North Solent SMP area. Please note that:

- Private individuals and organisations have certain permissive development rights or powers to protect their own property and to continue to maintain existing coastal and flood defences
- Landowner's rights to maintain defences remain, irrespective of the SMP policy, as is currently the case
- Landowners are advised to contact their Local Planning Authority before undertaking any works

- Proposals for improvements to existing defences or new defences or removal of defences require the applicant to obtain all relevant consents and permissions, including planning permission, before carrying out any works, as is currently the case
- The SMP is one material consideration that Planning Authorities refer to when forming planning decisions
- Each planning application will be considered and assessed on a case-by-case basis and not determined solely on the SMP coastal defence policy, however it will be taken into account
- Responses from landowners during public consultation have been considered when determining the final SMP policy

An Information note for landowners, planners and developers has been produced that summarises the role the non-statutory SMP has in the planning process and coastal planning issues regarding privately owned coastal defences (for details please visit www.northsolentsmp.co.uk)

- 5.10 The proposed development is in accordance with the policy of 'hold the line' in the vicinity of Netley Village. The applicants are proposing works to defend the coastline at their own cost.

The Environment Agency's Catchment Flood Management Plan

- 5.11 This comprises a suite of 'catchment flood management plans' for the country. These plans do not address coastal flooding from the sea which is addressed by the Shoreline Management Plans, which in this area is the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan.

The Local Flood Management Strategy

- 5.12 This Strategy was prepared by Hampshire County Council and is a strategic level document setting out the approach and policies of the County to its role as Lead Local Flood Authority.

Eastleigh Borough Surface Water Management Plan.

- 5.13 This document was prepared by Hampshire County Council and it focuses on surface water flood risk in Eastleigh. This Plan is not relevant to the current proposals because coastal flooding is outside the scope of the report.

Conservation Area

- 5.14 The pre-application site lies within the Netley Abbey Conservation Area which was first designated in 1981 and subsequently enlarged in 1992.
- 5.15 The Netley Abbey Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals were published in January 2010. The document refers to the issues of coastal erosion and protection, making reference also to the Shoreline Management Plan which was in preparation at that time.
- 5.16 The oak trees in the garden are protected by virtue of the Conservation Area status and also by Tree Preservation Orders. There are also Orders in the neighbouring garden of No 3a and in the grounds of Netley Court to the southwest.
- 5.17 The proposed replacement defence works are located away from these protected and significant trees. The Arboricultural Development Statement addresses the protection of these trees.

6.0 Design Considerations

- 6.1 It is proposed to use gabions for the defence works. These have been used extensively in the locality at varying heights depending upon local circumstances. They are a feature of this stretch of coastal cliff on Southampton Water.
- 6.2 The proposed works impact only the very end of the garden. There are some trees within the garden and so an Arboricultural Development Statement is submitted with this application.

Implementation

- 6.3 The works will be undertaken using access from the beach. The applicant has been in discussion with a contractor regarding the method of construction. A Construction environmental Management Plan has been produced and submitted with the application. This document sets out the proposed implementation measures and safeguards.

7.0 Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.1 An Ecological Impact Assessment has been undertaken by the ecologists Ecosa to identify any species that may require further investigation or special protection.

7.2 The findings of the Assessment conclude that no further phase 2 surveys are required. However proposed mitigation and compensation measures are recommended. These include sensitive timing of works, production of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), removal of vegetation by hand tools outside of the breeding bird season, precautionary method of works during vegetation clearance and provision of bird nesting habitats.

7.3 Following the advice received from the Council's ecologist at the time of the pre-application consultation the matter of BNG has been addressed. The ecologists, Ecosa, have produced guidance on the replacement planting at the end of the garden to ensure net gain and this information accompanies the application. This planting is illustrated on a detailing planting plan.

8.0 Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

8.1 A CEMP has been prepared by the Cowan Consultancy in consultation with Ecosa and the contractors.

8.2 Access to undertake the works will be from the beach via Beach Road, as has been the case with similar works undertaken previously on neighbouring properties.

8.3 The parking of vehicles and machinery is proposed at the bottom of Beach Road and an application for this temporary use will be made to Hampshire County Council as highway authority.

9.0 Habitat Regulations Assessment

9.1 Ecosa have prepared a 'Report to inform a Habitat Regulations Assessment'.

9.2 The application site lies adjacent to the Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar site and SPA and the Dorset and Solent Coast SPA. The objective of the Report is to inform an HRA of any aspects of the proposed development that would cause an adverse effect on the integrity of the protected sites and to advise on appropriate mechanisms for delivering mitigation where such effects are identified.

10.0 Heritage Considerations

10.1 The site lies within the Netley Abbey Conservation Area, but it is not considered that the proposed development has any impact upon the heritage interest of the locality.

- 10.2 There are no Listed properties in the immediate vicinity of the application site which would be impacted by the proposed development.

11.0 Conclusion

- 11.1 The proposed replacement sea defences have become more urgent as each winter sees the further erosion of the existing gabions. The proposed sea defences were the subject of a pre-application consultation last autumn. Officer feedback has informed some changes and simplification of the scheme.
- 11.2 The proposals are now supported by an Arboricultural Development Statement, a revised Ecological Impact Assessment, which addresses BNG, and detailed planting scheme.
- 11.3 The proposed development seeks to address all concerns previously raised and the maintenance of sea defences is in line with policy statements.

Note: Would kindly note that the property in question No 3 lies to the south-east of the attached house No 3a. On some OS extracts the numbers of the two properties have been transposed which leads to some confusion.