

Dear Ben

Thank you for this. Without more detail of what is proposed and a detailed assessment I can only offer you a very provisional view on the impact of the proposals.

Both Option two and Option 3 sites lie immediately adjacent to the scheduled monument of Hilsea Lines. These formed a critical part of the defences of Portsmouth, effectively barring access across the Portsea Creek. Together with the various forts and batteries of the period in Portsmouth and Gosport, they formed part of a huge defensive complex, of immense importance in understanding military technology and the resources committed to defending Britain in the nineteenth century. The Lines were completed in 1871, and consisted of a sequence of curtains and bastions with flanking batteries of guns. Beyond the earthworks there is a moat, which is part of the scheduled monument. This proposal lies between the scheduled moat and the scheduled earthworks.

For obvious reasons, this area would have been kept clear of impediments to the flanking fire which was key to the functioning of the defences, and it remains clear today, unlike most of the other locations along the north side of the lines. It lies between the moat and the guns, and allows the relationship between the two to be clearly understood, and also it allows an understanding of the relationship the West Demi-Bastion, the West Curtain and all the associated embrasures and earthworks.

The proposals would impact in two ways. Firstly, it would restrict the movement of anyone attempting to understand the functioning of the Lines, and thus detract from an appreciation of their significance. Secondly, it would detract from the contribution that this area makes as an open and unencumbered space to the setting of the monument. It was open and unencumbered for a reason, and that was because this was the 'killing zone' of the batteries, raked by heavy gunfire and within which nothing would survive. The presence of a BMX track could only detract from that.

I am not able to offer a view on what level of harm might result, but I think it is reasonable to say that there would be harm to the significance of the monument from a proposal of this type at this location. It would of course be a matter for the local authority to decide whether the level of harm was outweighed by the public benefits offered by the proposal. I would suggest however that a first step would be to see if those public benefits might be achieved elsewhere.

Regards

Chris

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From: Cracknell, Ben (Planning) [<mailto:Ben.Cracknell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk>]
Sent: 25 November 2015 17:40
To: Welch, Chris
Cc: Bunker, Louise
Subject: Hilsea Lines (Scheduled Ancient Monument) - Proposal for BMX pump track

Hilsea Lines (Scheduled Ancient Monument) - Proposal for BMX pump track

Hi Chris

Further to our phone conversation (25.11.15) regarding the above. Please find attached various files provided by colleagues indicating the location and a possible layout for a BMX track, and providing an idea of its possible appearance.

I understand that 'option 2' on the attached site plan PDF is under consideration.

In light of our conversation I have advised colleagues that you expressed reservations regarding the suggestion. (Albeit that this is of course in the absence of any detail regarding the proposal) As discussed, I would welcome a brief written response from you outlining your thoughts on the proposal.

I also draw your attention to the Conservation Area Appraisal and Guideline Document for the Hilsea Lines Conservation Area (No.27).

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/dev-cons-area-27-guidlines-hilsealines.pdf>

This contains a number of maps (on p.20 and p.28) and images which may help to inform your response.

Regards

Ben

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