

SOUTHSEA SEAFRONT FROM LONG CURTAIN MOAT IN THE WEST TO EASTNEY MARINE BARRACKS IN THE EAST

APPLICATION TO DISCHARGE CONDITIONS 2, 5A, 5B, 16, 21, 22, 24, 26, 17, 32, 33,34 AND 30A OF PLANNING PERMISSION 24/00987/VOC (PHASING PLAN, ARCHAEOLOGY, SOFT LANDSCAPING, EXTERNAL LIGHTING, STREET FURNITURE AND WALLS, HARD SURFACE MATERIALS, ROAD AND FOOTPATHS, EARTH BUND, SECONDARY DEFENCES, SCALE OF ROCK, PRIMARY DEFENCES AND APPROVAL OF SAMPLE FOR WORKS AT THE NAVAL MEMORIAL)

Application Submitted By:
Portsmouth City Council

On behalf of:
Portsmouth City Council
Coastal Partners on behalf of Portsmouth City Council

RDD: 30th December 2024

LDD: 25th February 2025

1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Southsea Coastal Scheme is a Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) scheme to upgrade the existing coastal defences along a 4.5km length of frontage at Southsea. It extends from Long Curtain Moat in the west to the Eastney Barracks in the east.
- 1.2 A planning application, 19/01097/FUL, for the flood defence works was submitted in July 2019. It constituted Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development and was accompanied by an Environmental Statement. It was determined by the Planning Committee on 4 December 2019 and planning permission granted, subject to conditions. The decision notice (dated 5 December 2019) includes the conditions worded such that the required information could be submitted and approved prior to each phase of flood defences commencing.
- 1.3 At the Planning Committee meeting for the original full application, Members discussed how they were keen to ensure that the public participated in the development of the finer design details such as materials, landscaping, public art and street furniture. They also requested that certain conditions, those related to these public realm elements, came back to Members for a decision, rather than being determined by the case officer. Those conditions were: 17 (soft landscaping), 22 (lighting), 23 (street furniture), 25 (hard surfacing), 26 (feature walls), 27 (roads and footpaths) and 38 (public art and interpretation). These condition numbers have subsequently been updated since the original decision notice was issued. The new numbers are 16 (soft landscaping), 21 (external lighting), 22 (street furniture), 24 (hard surfacing), 25 (feature walls), 26 (roads and footpaths) and 35 (public art and interpretation).
- 1.4 Since the original approval, there have been three subsequent approvals under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, seeking minor amendments to sub-frontage 4 (Ref. 21/00820/VOC), sub-frontage 5 West (Ref 22/01720/VOC) and sub-frontage 3 (Ref 23/00896/VOC). A further S73 application was submitted in August 2024 for minor material amendments to sub-frontage 2, and the far western end of sub-frontage 3) (Hover Travel to Kings Bastion), which was subsequently approved on 4th December 2024 (Ref 24/00987/VOC). An additional permission was also granted on 4th Dec for proposed works that fall outside of the original red line boundary (Ref

24/00989/FUL). Conditions associated with this permission will be discharged at a later date.

- 1.6 The conditions on the original planning decision notice, and those repeated on the new S.73 decision notices, were drafted such that the required information could be submitted and approved prior to each phase commencing. Coastal Partners are now seeking to re-discharge the relevant planning conditions, to account for design changes to the SF2/3 interface approved on 4th December 2024 (included as part of the Phase 4 construction).

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Southsea Seafront stretches for 4.5 km from Long Curtain Moat in the west to Eastney Esplanade in the East. This application relates to the southwestern end of sub frontage 3 (SF3) which is the section between Clarence Pier and the RN Memorial as shown highlighted below. :



3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

The relevant policies within the Portsmouth Plan (2012) would include:

- PCS9 (The Seafront)
- PCS12 (Flood Risk)
- PCS13 (A Greener Portsmouth)
- PCS14 (A Healthy City)
- PCS16 (Infrastructure and community benefit),
- PCS17 (Transport)
- PCS23 (Design and Conservation)

and saved policy DC21 (site contamination) of the Portsmouth City Local Plan.

The draft Pre-Submission Portsmouth Local Plan 2020-2040 was endorsed at full council on 28 May 2024 and consultation on the Pre-Submission Local Plan closed in September 2024.

Policies relevant to this application include:

- Core Policy PLP1: Design
- Core Policy PLP2: Climate Emergency
- Strategic Policy PLP31: Flooding
- Development Management Policy PLP36: Coastal Zone
- Strategic Policy PLP47: Movement and Transport
- Development Management Policy PLP48: Access and Parking
- Development Management Policy PLP49: Public Realm
- Strategic Policy PLP53: Historic Environment
- Development Management Policy PLP54: Listed Buildings
- Development Management Policy PLP55: Conservation Areas
- Development Management Policy PLP56: Archaeology

However at this time, having regard to the NPPF paragraph 48, limited weight is given to those policies.

The application site also falls within the area covered by the Seafront Masterplan SPD (2021).

4.0 STATUTORY DUTIES

4.1 The Local Planning Authority has statutory duties relating to the determination of the application which are set out in the following legislation:

- i. Section 70 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- ii. Section 38(6) of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- iii. The Equality Act 2010

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 Of relevance to the determination of this application is 24/00987/VOC which gained approval under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to amended plans primarily relating to sub frontage 2 (Clarence Pier) and is accompanied by the original environmental statement [July 2019] with the first addendum [May 2021], second addendum [December 2022] third addendum October 2023) and new addendum [August 2024] and updated appendices.

6.0 PROPOSAL

6.1 Approval is sought for the discharge of 13 conditions of planning permission 22/01720/VOC.

6.2 At the Committee's request, five conditions addressing public realm elements are brought for consideration, as set out below:

Condition No	Text & Reason	Documents submitted
16	<p>Soft Landscaping Scheme</p> <p>No development shall take place within each approved phase until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of tree and any other relevant soft landscaping works; the scheme shall specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted in the area of that phase. The approved tree works (and other planting where relevant) shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development within each approved phase.</p> <p>Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date</p>	

	<p>of planting in each approved phase, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, to protect the biodiversity of the site and preserve the character and appearance of the 'listed' park/conservation areas and the setting of other heritage assets, in accordance with policies PCS13 and PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan (2012) and the aims and objectives of the NPPF (2019).</p>	
21	<p>External lighting No development shall take place in each approved phase until details (including siting/alignment, type and appearance including materials/finishes) of the proposed external lighting (including any proposed decorative/festoon feature lighting) in the area of that relevant phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried in strict with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the listed park and conservation areas and the setting of other designated heritage assets across the whole of the site addressing an existing uneven distribution along the promenade and enhancing the sense of safety for all users by sub-frontage, in accordance with policies PCS9, PCS17 and PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan (2012) and the aims and the objectives of the NPPF (2019).</p>	
22	<p>Street Furniture and walls No development shall take place in each approved phase until details (including siting/alignment, type and appearance including materials/finishes) of the proposed street furniture and secondary defence walls (including include refuse bins, signage, seating, bollards, railings and other means of enclosure) in the area of that relevant phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried in strict with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the listed park and conservation areas and the setting of other designated heritage assets across the whole of the site, in accordance with policies PCS9 and PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan (2012) and the aims and the objectives of the NPPF (2019).</p>	
24	<p>Hard Surfacing Materials No works shall take place at each approved phase which involves the provision of promenade or other hard surfacing materials until details of the materials to be used in the relevant area have been submitted for the prior written approval of the local planning authority. Thereafter the works shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details. The details for approval shall include a detailed scheme of (a) type/texture/colour finishes (including any samples as may be necessary) including natural stone blocks at key public realm and historic areas; and (b) the proposed pattern treatments to add local distinctiveness within the floorspace at key public realm areas.</p> <p>Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the listed park and conservation areas and the setting of other designated</p>	

	heritage assets across the whole of the site and deliver attractive textural interest to the public realm by sub-frontage, in accordance with policies PCS9, PCS17 and PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan (2012) and the aims and the objectives of the NPPF (2019).	
26	<p>Roads and Footpaths</p> <p>No development shall take place on each approved phase at the site until the following details, relevant to the area within that phase, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:- (i) a specification of the type of construction for the roads and footpaths, including all relevant horizontal cross -sections and longitudinal sections showing the existing and proposed levels, together with details of materials, sightlines and kerbs, street lighting and the method of disposing surface water; (ii) a programme for constructing the roads and footpaths; and, (iii) details and specifications for the proposed works to car parks, including final finished levels and layout of spaces.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the roads/footpaths are constructed to an appropriate standard in the interests of highway safety, to create a safe and attractive environment and to preserve the character and appearance/setting of the array of designated heritage assets across the site, to accord with policies PCS17 and PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan (2012) and the aims and the objectives of the NPPF (2019).</p>	

Please note that Condition 25 (Feature Walls) and 35 (Public Art and Interpretation Boards) are not relevant to this phase of the sub frontage.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 Responses have been received from:

- i. Landscape Group - The landscape proposals are very comprehensive and demonstrate a well-considered and nicely developed package of work. I am pleased to see the quality of design intention in the paving, seating, materials and lighting, which reflects the detailing of previously delivered sub-frontages at Long Curtain Moat, the Castle and in front of the Rock Gardens. Design elements are notably robust and should cater well to the tough marine environment.

I am encouraged to see the planting palette for the terraces in the eastern end but am cautious about how successful the planting will be given the difficulty of establishing plants at Long Curtain Moat. I think careful review and monitoring of what succeeds and what doesn't in the first year will allow for replanting to infill gaps and select the hardiest of the species for future years.

I have voiced concern about the tree species selected before but note that the designers have kept these species in the palette: *Alnus glutinosa* "Laciniata" and *Acer campestre* "Red Shine". I tried establishing the *Alnus* species at the Park & Ride some years ago but all of the 5 trees died. I'm not sure what killed them off, but the site is quite exposed, and I suspected the trees did not fare well with salt laden winds. I would suggest that the *Alnus* and *Acer* trees be used as a trial and if they fail in the first two years that they should be replaced with hardier species more suited to the maritime location. Alternate species such as *Ulmus* (the disease-resistant clones) have done very well on the seafront.

- ii. Historic England - No advice offered.

- iii. Heritage Consultant - Any comments received will be reported at the meeting.
- iv. King's Harbour Master - No objections
- v. The Gardens Trust - no further comments
- vi. Regulatory Services - No comment
- vii. County Archaeologist - No objections

8.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 8.1 No third-party representations have been received. Applications for details reserved by planning condition(s) are not normally subject to publicity. Discretionary publicity by site notices were displayed seeking comments by 14 February 2025.

9.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS / COMMENT

Condition 16 - Soft Landscaping Scheme

- 9.1 The applicant has stated that in response to public feedback, additional areas of soft landscaping have been incorporated into the scheme in this section. Raised planters to edge the back of the promenade seaward of the Rock Gardens will be installed along with large sunken boulders. Planted terraces will soften the area seaward of the Lifeguard building and The Briny, with more terraced planting at Speakers Corner. The scheme has also been amended to respond to the Landscape Group's comments.
- 9.2 The introduction of this planting will help to soften the general appearance and transition in levels along this section. The planting has been chosen to reflect the existing character of vegetated shingle along the seafront.
- 9.3 The planting bed will be made up of varying depths of flint gravel, providing a natural barrier against weeds and reducing future maintenance requirements.
- 9.4 There are three distinct species habits – evergreen, seasonal and annual wildflowers. The palette has been designed for the evergreen species to provide year-round structure and colour. The seasonal plants are a mixture of those existing on the local beaches and additional plants with biodiversity interest. The annual wildflowers should be seen as providing sparks of colour throughout the year, their flowering periods will ebb and flow, changing locations year after year as they self-seed and colonise.

Condition 21 - External Lighting

- 9.6 Listed Building Consent has been granted for the removal and reinstatement of the historic lamp columns within the extent of sub-frontage 3 and the western extent of sub-frontage 4. These will be spaced at appropriate intervals, with new, modern lighting placed along the new buffer strip between the cycle lane and parking. These new, modern lamp columns will provide the appropriate level of lighting. The details regarding the methods of removal, refurbishment and reinstatement of the historic lamps are all covered by a separate condition not covered by this statement (Condition 28).
- 9.7 A selection of four types/heights of modern lighting columns will be used throughout this phase, in addition to the historic lamps:
- 7m lighting columns with a metal, powder coated finish (drawing code LCL7)
 - 5m lighting columns with a metal, powder coated finish (drawing code LCL5)
 - 5m timber lighting columns (drawing code LC1B)
 - 7m lighting columns with a metal, powder coated finish (drawing code LCSO7)
- 9.8 The 5m timber columns (LCL5) feature along the promenade in front of the Naval War Memorial. The 7m metal 'stick' columns (LCL7) are then used as the main functional

lighting columns, interspersed with the historic lamps. They are set further back on the promenade to allow the significance of the historic lamps to be maintained (adjacent to the highway). The remaining columns (LCL1B and LCSO7) are used when appropriate on the open land west of Blue Reef Aquarium.

- 9.9 The proposed details of all lighting columns and design details, which can be found in Appendix D (Lighting Plans) of the Condition Discharge Statement available to view on the website, are considered acceptable.

Condition 22 - Street Furniture and walls

- 9.10 As per the condition, details of materials proposed for the street furniture and secondary defence walls have been submitted. The street furniture for Phase 4/sub-frontage 3 follows the style and design of that already approved for other frontages of the scheme to ensure a consistent appearance along the seafront. Within this overall style though, each sub-frontage has bespoke features that have been designed for the specific character and context of the location. As for the previous street furniture proposals, everything has been designed and selected to both provide resistance to the harsh exposed coastal conditions of Southsea and complement the existing environment. This condition includes all proposed street furniture, including seating, balustrading and handrails, bins, and any play area features. Lighting is considered under a separate condition

- 9.11 The details of the proposed street furniture includes:

- Seating:
As per previous phases, the seating design comprises a mix of softwood timber benches in a variety of bespoke styles and configurations. Some are stand-alone and some are built onto the terraces and secondary defence walls. The full proposed details can be found on the submitted plans.

The mix of seating, and in particular the terraced seating, is considered to help create a sense of place for this section; the applicant hopes that Speakers Corner will become a focal point and destination, rather than somewhere to pass through

- Balustrading and handrails:
The design has been kept simple, with the provision of anodised aluminium to overcome existing problems of rust encountered by using steel and stainless steel. The handrails that accompany the various pedestrian steps are the same design as at SF1, consisting of powder-coated aluminium in RAL7044, with a clear coated kebyony handrail top. The balustrading along the landward edge of the vehicle access ramp is a simple metal post and tension cable design in RAL 7044.
- Bollards:
There are three different types of bollards that feature along this section: removable, timber and seating cubes.
- Bins:
Powder coated bins that do not clutter the promenade will be provided, to match the other metal work.
- Life buoy:
To be provided as per the submitted plans.
- Cycle stand:
To be provided as per the submitted plans

- 9.13 The proposed details, summarised above are considered to be acceptable.

Condition 24 - Hard Surfacing Materials

- 9.12 The hard surfacing materials were discussed in great detail with Historic England in relation to the sections of the scheme around Long Curtain Moat and Southsea Castle, two scheduled monuments. It was agreed that two surface finishes would be used, one for around these significant heritage assets and one for the remaining promenade. Both finishes were an in-situ decorative aggregate but with different etched finishes. The 'historic' finish was a smoother 0.5mm etch, with the 'normal' promenade being a 3mm etch. This ensures that the historic areas are clearly visible, and that the seafront is coherent as a whole. The plate below (extracted from the application document) shows the approved two types of finish (the left and right photos).



Figure 14: In-situ decorative surfacing etch and aggregate finishes ranging from the 0.5mm (left) to approx. 3mm (right)

- 9.13 The shingle to be used in the aggregate finish is a locally sourced bespoke Southsea mix to ensure the finish blends well with the local context.
- 9.14 In terms of future maintenance requirements, the surfacing will outlast any other surface that could be used within such a harsh marine environment. By removing the requirement and reliance for regular future maintenance visits and repairs, the applicant is ensuring that a high-quality setting to the seafront is achieved and retained, for as long as possible
- 9.15 The full details of the proposed hard finishes can be found within the plans in Appendix F (Hard Works Plans) of the Condition Discharge Statement. These are summarised below and are considered to be acceptable.
- Promenade surfacing – 3mm etch exposed aggregate finish, Southsea shingle mix, (matches SF1 surfacing east of Spur Redoubt and SF4 surfacing east and west of Southsea Castle).
 - Naval War Memorial – Directly in front of the Naval War natural York stone paving will be used.
 - Primary/secondary defence walls – smooth concrete in warm white (matches SF1 and SF4 primary defence walls)
 - Cycle lane – coloured tarmac, buff, 6mm • Buffer strip – smooth asphalt surfacing
 - Highway – asphalt surfacing (except in front of the Naval War Memorial). In front of the Naval War Memorial the highway will consist of granite sett pavers.

Condition 26 - Highway Layout

- 9.16 The highway layout remains as per the approved plans submitted with planning application ref 23/00896/VOC. The highway layout consists of the following:
- 1 way west bound traffic carriageway. The carriageway width will predominantly be 4.2m wide, reducing locally to 3.2m in front of the Naval War Memorial.
 - A mixture of echelon and parallel parking.
 - 3m two-way cycleway, with an additional 2m buffer strip between the cycleway and the parking. The trafficked areas are segregated from the adjacent promenade and cycle lanes.
- 9.17 The construction of this section is expected to take place from mid October 2025 to mid - July 2026, however these timescales are indicative and subject to change.
- 9.18 The full layout of the highway is shown in Appendix G (Highways Plans)

10.0 Conclusion

10. On the basis of the information submitted with the application pursuant to these conditions and to their consideration above, the details submitted in respect of Conditions 16, 21, 22, 24 and 26 for this phase only are considered acceptable.
- 10.2 It should be noted that this application also seeks Officer delegated approval for the details submitted pursuant to the following conditions:
- Condition 2 - Phasing Plan
 - Conditions 5a and 5b - archaeology
 - Condition 17- earth bund
 - Condition 32 - secondary defences
 - Condition 33 - scale of rock
 - Condition 34 - Scale of Primary defences

RECOMMENDATION

Approve details submitted pursuant to Conditions 16, 21, 22, 24 and 26