



## 4683/21/FUL - Harbour Watch, East Portlemouth



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Charity number: 263985

Registered address: Olde Stones, West Alvington, Kingsbridge, South Devon TQ7 3PN



**PLANNING REF: 4683/21/FUL**

**DESCRIPTION: Demolition of existing house and garage. Replacement detached dwelling, outside pool, gazebo and associated landscaping.**

**ADDRESS: Harbour Watch, East Portlemouth.**

30<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## **LETTER OF OBJECTION FROM THE SOUTH HAMS SOCIETY**

### **The South Hams Society interest**

For the last 60 years, the South Hams Society has been stimulating public interest and care for the beauty, history and character of the South Hams. We encourage high standards of planning and architecture that respect the character of the area. We aim to secure the protection and improvement of the landscape, features of historic interest and public amenity and to promote the conservation of the South Hams as a living, working environment. We take the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty very seriously and work hard to increase people's knowledge and appreciation of our precious environment. We support the right development - in the right places - and oppose inappropriate development.

The South Hams Society wish to express our deep concern regarding the development proposal set out in this application.

A separate application (4669/21/HHO) for the construction of a new boat house presents further additional new built form in this sensitive estuarine location. The Society will comment on this proposal in due course.

The location of the proposed replacement dwelling sits within the AONB, Heritage Coast/Undeveloped Coast, and SSSI Designation where the environmental and aesthetic qualities of the waterfront landscape present precious amenity benefits, appreciated by both locals and visitors alike.

The proposed removal of many trees in order to facilitate development will adversely degrade the waterfront landscape, conflicting with planning Policies at national and local level.

South Hams District Council has a statutory duty to protect and enhance the South Devon AONB, which is a nationally prized landscape and a major economic asset.

Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires the Local Authority to adhere to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the landscape and natural beauty of AONB's.

NPPF paragraph 176 specifies that great weight must be given to this purpose.

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The applicants are therefore required to demonstrate how the location, siting, layout, scale and design of the proposal will 'conserve and/or enhances what is special and locally distinctive to the site'.

The Society believes that the removal of trees will cause significant harm to the landscape and scenic beauty of the South Devon AONB and therefore the requirement to conserve and/or enhance is not demonstrated.

SHDC guidance on TREES ON DEVELOPMENT SITES states:

*'It is important that when new development is taking place, the high quality trees which exist on the site are identified and retained. It is also important that space is made, wherever possible, for the planting of new trees'.*

RETAINING TREES ON DEVELOPMENT SITES states:

*There is a clear and well established process for protecting trees in relation to new development. This process is set out in British Standard 5837: 2012 which establishes a clear process for:*

- *Surveying trees on a site coming forward for development.*
- *Classifying their level of importance and their priority for being retained on a development site.*
- *Incorporating their retention into the design at the outset.*
- *Putting in place measures to ensure their protection from harm during development.*
- *Putting in place long term management measures for their care once development is in place.*

Guidance further sets out that:

*Trees can be a significant asset to a development site and can add to the value of properties. Proper and early consideration can bring forward the right design.*

The Society note with interest the analysis submitted by the Council Tree Officer (Internal Consultee response 18/01/22) and we believe the comments that are made within his appraisal clearly illustrate a number of significant material constraints to the development proposal.

In our opinion the application is contrary to Policy DEV28 of the JLP and the guidance as set out in British Standard 5837:2012, and we fully endorse and support the Officer's Recommendation of Objection on arboricultural merit.

Within the AONB, Undeveloped Coast and Heritage Coast, Policies DEV23, DEV24 & DEV25 require Development to conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic and visual quality, and the natural beauty of their surroundings.

DEV25 (8) specifically requires development proposals to:

- *Be designed to prevent the addition of incongruous features.*
- *Be located and designed to respect scenic quality and maintain an areas distinctive sense of place, or reinforce local distinctiveness.*

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- Be designed to prevent impacts of light pollution from artificial light on intrinsically dark landscapes.

It is the view of the Society that the proposal will inflict detrimental impact on the special qualities of the protected waterfront landscape and therefore conflicts with these policy objectives.

The Society note that East Portlemouth Parish Council have raised concerns about light pollution that would result from the replacement dwelling, and we share these concerns.

Guidance within NPPF paragraph 180 sets out to identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value, and this includes limiting the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

The importance of dark skies to nature, wildlife and human wellbeing is increasingly recognised in England through planning law, and particularly so within AONBs (as recognised in the Glover review) where light pollution can affect Landscape character.

Local AONB guidelines state:

'Natural nightscapes and dark skies are defining special qualities of the South Devon AONB: they are of natural, cultural and scenic importance'.

The Society are deeply concerned that this proposal will introduce impactful light spillage into the sensitive estuarine location and, in accordance with policy, this must be resisted.

In 2019 an application was submitted for a property further along the East Portlemouth waterfront at Millbay (The Weald 0782/19/FUL) Proposed reconstruction of garage with extensions to form sail loft, boat storage and ancillary residential accommodation to basement.

Within the Officer report - 04/10/2019 when discussing PROTECTED LANDSCAPES the Officer has stated:

*' Within the AONB, Undeveloped Coast and Heritage Coast, the scale and design of any new built form should be appropriate to the character and natural beauty of the protected landscape. There are some notable local examples of new development which is clearly contrary to the prevailing character. These are prominent features in the landscape that are damaging to local distinctiveness, rural character and scenic quality, and we would not seek to perpetuate or expand this deterioration of character.'*

The Society agree implicitly with this statement which we feel is highly relevant and applicable to the proposed development at Harbour Watch.



The Society are deeply concerned with the harm that demolition of buildings and redevelopment are having on the environment. We recently commented on Sandnes in Salcombe where demolition material was ending up on a nearby field. The consequence of the removal of complete buildings, rebuilding with new building materials arriving on large lorries and poor planning control can be seen in the surrounding area of the estuary environment.

### **Damage to the surrounding environment**

The Society will demonstrate the environmental damage being caused at East Portlemouth.

Ditch End, East Portlemouth, Salcombe. TQ8 8PU

Ditch End is now known as Milton House following planning approval for a replacement dwelling in September 2011 and its demolition and rebuild shortly after.

However, hard surfacing areas increased considerably without any drain installation at the end of the drive.

Within 5 years of its completion the shoreline rock face supporting the highway directly opposite the drive collapsed.



2006.



2017:



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2016 – The new much larger building and drive of Milton House.



The public highway, Millbay Road.



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2020. The rock face collapses.



Shoreline repaired with a new hard wall directly opposite the driveway (there is still no end of driveway drainage. Rainwater is still allowed to run across the highway).



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Stones Boatyard, Yalton, East Portlemouth. Salcombe TQ8 8PA - 2017



2017:

1908/17/FUL Provision of dwelling for a rural worker

Planning Officer report.

*'Highways/Access: The access to the site has already been used in association with the boat building business on site. It has thus had to manage vehicles with trailers for the last 12/13 years.*

*The Highway Authority have recommended standing advice. The access was approved in 2004 when the boat building application was approved. It has therefore been designed to take more frequent and larger numbers of vehicles than a single dwelling and as many of those trips will be by the applicant then it is likely that the increase in trips to and from the site will be negligible.*

*Because of the levels on the site, it is proposed that the vehicular access to the dwelling be located further up the driveway where the levels are more conducive to an access drive. The access will serve the proposed garage at the rear of the dwelling. It is proposed that a new hgate will be located across the access to the boatyard just beyond the access drive for the dwelling*

*It is therefore not considered that there will be a highway issue with the proposed dwelling.*

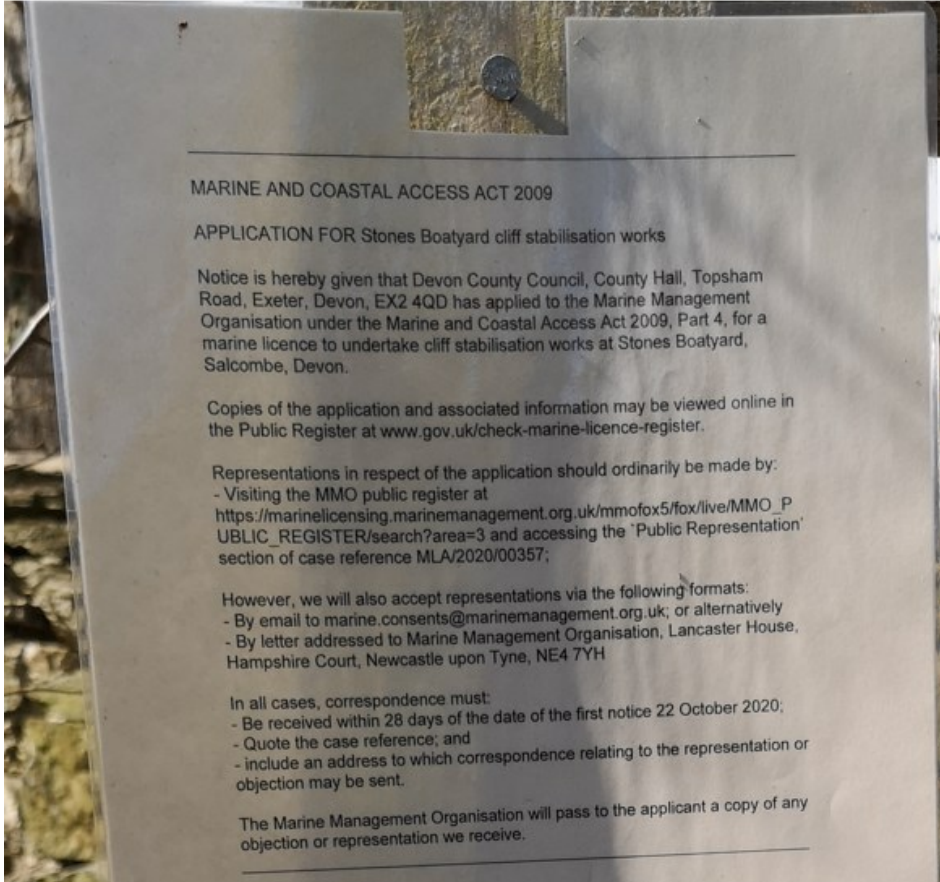
*Drainage: sufficient information has been provided for the drainage engineers to be satisfied at this stage subject to two conditions'.*

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2020:



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2021



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2009 Stones boatyard entrance.



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2021



Around the corner.



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Looking back.



From above.



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100 metres towards East Portlemouth - 2021



2009



And the Estuary shoreline damage.

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The shoreline now looks like this:



In 2009 this small lane that runs along the shore line looked like this.



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The new builds, demolitions and rebuilds as you approach East Portlemouth on the South Pool to East Portlemouth Road has been ruinous to this once small tranquil lane. It is also obvious that multiple damaged points are transforming the estuary shoreline.

The road network from Stokenham, Chillington and Frogmore to the villages and hamlets surrounding the eastern side of the Salcombe to Kingsbridge estuary are still largely minor roads and lanes.

The images submitted illustrate the damage that the demolitions and rebuilds are causing at the sites and to the surrounding environment.

Removal of trees from the estuary banks and allowing surface water to run over the shoreline is also contributing to degradation of the SSSI estuary environment.



We also note that the Harbour Authority has a strong policy regarding private pontoons on the estuary. The Society would submit that because the Salcombe Kingsbridge is highly regarded as a SSSI and is designated as a local nature reserve that this policy would extend to the private proliferation of shoreline facilities such as boathouses and slipways.

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Harbour Office Policy to private pontoons.

**From Hugh Marriage** OBE

6 Halwell House  
South Pool  
Kingsbridge  
Devon TQ7 2RX

15 December 2021

David Jeffery  
South Hams District Council

Dear Mr Jeffery

**Planning Application Ref:** 0591/21/FUL

I am writing in my capacity as the Deputy Chair of Salcombe Harbour Board to make a comment on this application.

It is clear from the site location plan for this application that the proposed building is quite close to the Harbour Authority's pontoon in Frogmore Creek and the public access to it. I can see no reference to this pontoon in the documents, and there may not be any need for any such reference, but I thought it would be helpful to make the Harbour Board's position clear in relation to the public access.

For many years, the Harbour Board has had a firm policy against private pontoons in the Harbour, ensuring that all pontoons in the Harbour are for public use. In order to safeguard this policy and especially to prevent any awkward precedents being established, if public access to any pontoon were to become restricted or limited in any way, the Board would have no alternative but to remove the pontoon immediately and without notice. There is no suggestion in this planning application that access to the Frogmore pontoon is likely to be limited in any way, but it is nevertheless important that all parties know about the Harbour Board's position and the action that would be taken if the public access to Frogmore pontoon were to be restricted.

A copy of this letter goes for information to the Chair of Frogmore Parish Council.

Yours sincerely

The South Hams Society therefore **objects** to the demolition and development at this location.

For and on behalf of the South Hams Society.

Richard Howell,  
Chairman.

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