



SAVE OUR SEASHORE

JULY 2024 – DEVELOPERS APPEAL AGAINST THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL'S DECISION TO REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEASHORE AT WESTHILL LANE, FORT VICTORIA

*In January 2024, planners robustly refused planning permission for these uncompromising proposals outlining nine reasons why this **WOULD NOT** be a sustainable form of development.*

Under new Government targets, could the appeal inquiry potentially overturn this decision?

WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM THESE PROPOSALS?

Developers and builders? – The proposed development unashamedly crams five luxury four-bedroom houses onto this tiny strip of land. It's said that the sale of these houses would fund the refurbishment of the pier, enabling tenuous new business activities. There's profit to be made, so: **Developers will benefit.**

Potential local buyers? – Would islanders buy such substantial high-priced properties? They would probably become second homes and sit empty for much of the year. Scientists tell us that sea levels **WILL** rise, and this area lies in Flood Zone 3, where development should be avoided. Why build houses on a site where 'safe rooms' and reliance on emergency rescue services are essential features? **NO benefit to locals in need of affordable housing.**

Local businesses? – This represents a significant construction project, which would take two years or more to complete. How would existing Fort Victoria businesses and local cafés survive during the highly disruptive build period? And would they recover when the beach and sea views are dominated by five substantial luxury houses? **NO benefit to local businesses**

Local community? – Fort Victoria, the Country Park, and the surrounding beach area are amazing open spaces that attract visitors throughout the year. It's a huge local draw – fishermen, joggers, families, school children, dog walkers, ramblers, beachcombers, artists, photographers – the list goes on. Future rising sea levels will reduce public access to the Westhill beach area, and the proposed development will force people onto Westhill Lane, walking in the shadow of these incongruous, looming houses with no sea view at all: **NO benefit to the local community**

How many people walk along the foreshore at Westhill Lane?

An estimated 40,000 people a year

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Quote appeal reference: APP/P2114/W/24/3346806



Fort Victoria? This Grade II-listed building is an important historical asset. These plans clearly illustrate that the Fort would be overwhelmed by this vast overdevelopment, and various views to and from the fort would be impeded: **NO benefit at all.**

Fort Victoria Pier? – The pier is a remarkable monument to more testing times in our country’s history. It’s widely photographed, regularly appearing on Facebook pages as a fascinating feature of West Wight’s coastline. Fort Victoria was originally constructed to offer an expansive view from east to west across the Solent and the pier has never had substantial buildings sited on it. Erecting buildings at the end of the pier would restrict and impair this view: **NO benefit at all.**



Local area and environment? The proposed development site looks unkempt, but this is very easily remedied. On the other hand, this site lies between two Marine Conservation Zones and the potential impact of these proposals on the area’s biodiversity and geodiversity is a considerable concern. Any development will irrevocably change and damage this unique seashore for future generations: **NO benefit at all.**

While the new Government can be applauded for ‘Taking the brakes off Britain’ and relaxing planning regulations to encourage new, affordable housing projects, there must be exceptions that ensure the protection and preservation of cherished areas and national landmarks.

The proposed buildings will overwhelm Grade II Fort Victoria, dominate the public beach at Westhill Lane, and negatively impact the surrounding area. We urge the inquiry to uphold the Isle of Wight Council’s well-considered decision to refuse planning permission for this unsympathetic and uncompromising development proposal.

To see the scale and potential impact of this overdevelopment, and why the Isle of Wight Council refused planning permission, go to:
www.saveourseashore.org.uk

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