

Cabinet – 15 February 2024

Written question from Cllr Andrew Garratt to the Leader

At the planning committee meeting of 23 January, I spoke as ward councillor on the application for 203 homes at Acorn Farm on Horsebridge Hill.

I highlighted the impact of this development on Horsebridge Hill and the rest of this strategically important route between Newport and Cowes. The impact is in terms of traffic volume, speed, and flow, as well as on residents who live on side roads which are already difficult to turn in and out of, and for safety of pedestrians and other road users.

Other developments are possible under the draft Island Planning Strategy's proposals for sites in Parkhurst & Hunnyhill as well as further north along the route.

What might be done to ensure the impact of extra traffic is minimised and to ensure that there is proper provision for alternative transport?

Would an approach to government for funding follow on from forming any proposals, in a similar way that led to the funding for St Mary's junction?

Response

Thank you for your question, Cllr Garratt. Following discussions with you, as the local councillor for Parkhurst and Hunnyhill, the draft Island Planning Strategy has been revised and I was pleased to be able to give greater confidence to you and your residents that this area and the potential highways impacts, along with other impacts, will be considered in a greater level of detail through a dedicated masterplanning exercise, should the draft IPS progress.

As you'll know in conjunction with the recently consented scheme at Acorn Farm, a multi-user path from the site to Dodnor Lane and the cycle track has also been consented, which I was particularly pleased about, as it is a sensible addition to the network and a great way to provide greater choice and accessibility.

I've been advised that officers from Planning Services and Highways are in ongoing dialogue over the potential highways impacts in this area and how best to ensure there is a co-ordinated and proactive approach from the local authority.

In terms of how any highways interventions would be funded, absolutely we can look at whether we can secure Government funding as happened with the improvements at the St Mary's junction. We will also expect developers to either undertake the required improvements themselves and/or provide financial contributions towards the improvements, but the key point for me is that without an adopted IPS in place the joined-up approach in this area will be more challenging to deliver and we will almost certainly face difficulties if planning applications come forward in a piecemeal manner without an up-to-date plan.