

Flood defence issues (Point 1e of Policy E4)

- 7.79 It is important that any proposals do not compromise the integrity and continuity of flood defences such as sea walls and consequently it will be necessary to consult with the Environment Agency and the Coastal Partners. Consideration will need to be given to the NPPF and Policy D7.

Safeguarding development opportunities and access to sites (Point 1f of Policy E4)

- 7.80 Proposals for new or extended marinas should not have a detrimental impact on the potential to develop other sites in the vicinity nor restrict access to sites with the potential for development. This could include for example, reducing the width of a channel making it difficult for boats using other existing or potential future development sites to pass.

Policy E5: Promoting a Digital Peninsula

POLICY E5: PROMOTING A DIGITAL PENINSULA

- 1. The Council recognises the role of digital infrastructure in driving economic growth, improving digital connectivity, and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents and visitors. The Council will work with partners to promote the widespread adoption and deployment of digital infrastructure in development proposals to ensure equitable access for all.**
- 2. Planning permission will be granted for digital infrastructure provided:**
 - a) the feasibility of sharing an existing mast or erecting antennae on an existing building or other structure has been investigated and demonstrated to be unsuitable;**
 - b) they do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character of the area or the appearance of any building;**
 - c) the proposal does not harm important nature conservation interests;**
 - d) all reasonable measures have been taken in respect of siting, design and landscaping to minimise the impact of the development;**
 - e) they do not cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services, broadcast or telecommunication services, or instrumentation operated in the national interest.**

EXPLANATION OF POLICY E5

Promoting new digital infrastructure (Point 1 of Policy E5)

- 7.81 Digital infrastructure includes full fibre broadband and 5th generation telecommunication technology (often referred to as 5G). It is a constantly advancing area of technology which often requires rapid changes in infrastructure. According to the latest available coverage and speed data, Gosport is currently well served in terms of digital infrastructure. This is because as a mainly urban local authority area with a relatively large potential customer base, Gosport has and continues to be selected as a location for private sector investment in digital infrastructure and digital service provision. However advancements in digital connectivity are rapid and Gosport needs to continue to be well served.
- 7.82 Digital infrastructure can help deliver a number of benefits including:
- Enabling areas which may have disincentives for businesses (e.g. limited transport infrastructure) to operate more competitively;
 - Enabling business to operate competitively in global, national and local markets;
 - Provide greater opportunities for home working and reduce commuting;
 - Providing opportunities to develop local ICT expertise and attract new businesses as part of emerging clusters (e.g. knowledge based and creative industries) as well as enhancing existing ones such as advanced manufacturing;
 - Enabling new and efficient ways to deliver a range of services including those provided by public and voluntary agencies (for example health, education, transport and energy management, community information) which can have benefits to local business.
- 7.83 The GIIP recognises the importance of this technology for the future economy in Gosport and states that the roll-out of 5G technology and ultrafast broadband connectivity (100Mbps+) is a high priority. It adds that providing fast and reliable digital connectivity to reinforce Gosport's attractiveness as a business location, particularly within knowledge and service based sectors where growth is required to diversify Gosport's existing business base is critical.
- 7.84 The Council has developed The Digital Peninsula, Gosport's Digital Strategy. The Strategy aims that Gosport's residents and businesses have access to the digital connection that they need, in terms of speed and capacity, both now and in the future. They will also have the skills and access to any support needed to utilise that digital connection for their benefit. Thereby making Gosport a better place to live and work.
- 7.85 Gosport's Digital Strategy will apply the following principles in delivering the priorities of the strategy:

- Private sector lead investment in new digital infrastructure and services provision, with public sector facilitation/intervention where necessary.
- Partnership working - a collaborative approach with relevant partners, from the private and public sector.
- Communication and co-ordination – to support partnership working and also improve links between local groups, communities, organisations and businesses; and with regional partners and the private sector.
- Inclusivity – to help enable residents from under-represented groups and those with multiple barriers to employment play a fuller part in their community.

7.86 The Strategy has four priorities, these are:

1. Digital Infrastructure and service provision accessibility
2. Digital inclusion and service provision take-up/usage
3. Digital skills and careers
4. The Gosport Digital Peninsula Partnership.

7.87 In delivering priority 1 of the Strategy, the planning system has a vital role to play to ensure the installation of the latest digital infrastructure and the provision of digital services as part of new development or redevelopment schemes. Therefore, Policy E5 requires all development to provide the latest digital infrastructure and digital services.

7.88 Building regulations set out gigabit broadband infrastructure and connectivity requirements for the construction of new homes in England. These regulations are supported by statutory guidance. Further information on broadband and new homes is available online²⁵⁶.

7.89 The Council will work with developers, service providers and other partners to facilitate the provision of technology within the Borough including within the Regeneration Areas (RA1-RA10). Daedalus, the Haslar Peninsula and Sultan will be a particular focus in order to stimulate hi-tech businesses and training opportunities.

Telecommunication masts (Point 2 of Policy E5)

7.90 It is important the Borough has sufficient coverage of telecommunication masts and associated infrastructure while not detracting from the quality of the local environment. The NPPF states planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full-fibre broadband connections.

7.91 The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable

²⁵⁶ www.gov.uk/guidance/new-build-connectivity-information-for-developers

capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged.

- 7.92 Consequently there is a need to use existing masts and structures unless the need for a new site has been justified. Where a new mast is proposed developers will be required to provide evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure. Applicants will also be required to provide a statement that self-certifies that, when operational, guidelines produced by the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) will be met.
- 7.93 Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged. The height of the proposed mast/antenna, the nature of ancillary equipment and the scope of landscaping and screening will be considered. Proposals must have regard to areas of landscape prominence and environmentally sensitive areas, such as the Strategic Gap, conservation areas, the coast and harbour and areas of nature conservation value. All telecommunications development is subject to the normal statutory procedures in so far as Listed Building Consent is concerned. In addition to planning considerations, all mast proposals must comply with the prevailing technical and industry standards. Where appropriate, provision is also to be made for the reinstatement of the site after it is no longer required for telecommunication purposes.
- 7.94 Planning applications for telecommunications development (including applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order) should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. This should be supported by the outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed near a school or college or within a statutory safeguarding zone surrounding an aerodrome or technical site (see Policy LE12).

Further information

The Digital Peninsula, Gosport's Digital Strategy
www.gosport.gov.uk/GBLP2042

Solent LEP's Gosport Infrastructure Investment Plan
www.gosport.gov.uk/GBLP2042