

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

COASTAL FORUM

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24TH JULY 2008

Chairman: The Mayor, Cllr Ms. S. Holman

LRTC: Cllr Mrs. A. Bradbury, Cllr Mrs. L. Jenkin, Cllr O. Lovell, Cllr P. Williams, Cllr S. Williams and Miss V. Stickler (Admin. Officer)

WDDC: Mr. N. Browning (Principal Engineer), Cllr M. Penfold and Cllr D. Turner

DCC: Mr. R. Edmonds (Earth Science Manager)

Guests: Ms. M. Bolton (Environment Group), Mr. A. Budden, Ms. W. Davies (LymeForward), Mr. M. Dixon (Lyme Regis Development Trust), Mr. R. Finch, Mrs. J. Finch, Mr. K. Gollop, Ms. M. Hedges, Mr. P. Howse, Ms. A. Maslen (Lyme Regis News), Mr. A. Payne, Mr. T. Sage, Mrs. A. Sankey, Mr. P. Sankey, Mr. J. Sargent, Mr. T. Sweeney, Mr. J. Tesoriere, Mrs. C. Thomas, Mr. G. Thomas, Mr. B. Thornber, Ms. R. Price, Mr. F. Price, Mr. D. Venes, Mr. J. Wiscombe and Mrs. B. Wood

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs. B. Austin, Cllr Miss L. Campbell, Cllr D. Cozens, Cllr K. Hitchcock, Cllr Col. G. Brierley (DCC), Mr. Davies, Mr. K. Dibben, Mr. T. Gedge, Mr. R. Gollop, Mr. F. Lestner, Mrs. A. Sargent, Ms. S. Whitmore and Mr. N. Williams.

Matters arising from the notes of the previous meeting

In error, the notes from the previous meeting were not distributed prior to the meeting. Therefore, these minutes are enclosed.

Update on May 2008 landslip

Mr. R. Edmonds of Dorset County Council Jurassic Coast Team explained the geological processes that had led to the slip and the changes in the geology of area since it happened. Mr. Edmonds explained that the slip had continued to move after the main event and that it was being closely monitored for developments. Mr. Edmonds used a series of photographs to show the land before and after the slip and to explain the layers within the cliffs that have been moving.

- Q) What was the digger on the slip being used for in the past few weeks?
A) This was being used by SITA (contracted by WDDC) to remove larger pieces of waste from the tip that had come down with the slip.
- Q) Is the beach still closed to the public?
A) Due to hazards such as broken glass and mud, the area had a temporary closure notice to warn the public of this. Access was possible but this would be at a person's own risk and great care must be taken.
- Q) What will happen next?
A) Mr. Edmonds hoped that there would not be too much more movement in the slip but predicted that a future slip could happen near Stonebarrow.

Outcome of public display/consultation, January 2008

A copy of Mr. N. Browning's presentation with detailed data and plans is available to view in the Lyme Regis Town Council Offices.

Mr. N. Browning explained that Phase 4 had progressed from the preliminary design stage in May 2006 to meetings with consultees, through to a public consultation. He explained that from this process, a preferred design option had been selected. The preferred option was subsequently discussed with environmental groups and organisations to assess the impact that it could have on the natural environment. This resulted in a 'modified preferred scheme' (see attachment).

The preferred scheme involves a new sea wall being built which would extend from the existing sea wall with a slope to the beach. The work would extend to around 60 metres from the site of the May landslip. The existing jetty on Church Cliff beach would also be replaced. In addition to the new structure, soil nailing, drainage, counterfort drains, earth buttresses and stabilisation work would take place in the cliffs and slopes behind the beach, to include two deep lines of drainage above and below Charmouth Road car park and in the allotments.

Mr. Browning reported on the results of the January consultation and highlighted the concerns expressed by local residents in the questionnaires. These included the proposed footpath, retaining access to the foreshore, damage to the allotments and the potential loss of individual species that inhabit the area. There was a serious concern that fossils would be lost behind the new sea wall.

Main Environmental issues

Mr. Browning explained that as the Phase 4 area was designated as part of the World Heritage site, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc., there were issues to be dealt with surrounding the natural environment of the area. The design team were required to evaluate the proposed design and make adjustments to cater for the wildlife, plant life and fossils. The concluding design which will be put forward for approval must be the least damaging to all of the above and include compensatory measures to aid the re-establishment of the natural environment.

Funding

Mr. Browning explained the Environment Agency's new system for allocating funding and the complications that this had for the funding application for the Phase 4 scheme. The Environment Agency works to a list of criteria that proposed projects must meet and the WDDC team were working to ensure that the scheme complied with the criteria. However, representatives from the Environment Agency had inspected the existing sea wall and the outcome of their inspection would have an impact on the resulting funding decision.

Programme

The current proposed timetable for the scheme:

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| Autumn 2008 | Complete Consultation Process |
| December 2008 | Submit planning application |
| Spring 2009 | Receive decision on planning application |
| 2009 | Funding applications |
| 2009/2010 | Detailed design work and preparation work |
| 2010 | Commence works on Phase 4 scheme to last for approximately two years |

Discussion

- Q) Would there be any delay built into the process for Phase 4 to wait for the outcome of the Shoreline Management Plan 2?
- A) Mr. Browning did not anticipate that there would be any change to the policies for Lyme Regis in the near future.
- Q) What impact would this have on people that lead guided fossil walks for a living, would the foreshore be closed for the works?
- A) Mr. Browning believed that there may be closures to the foreshore and that someone would be on hand to help any members of the public on the beach as there was a fear that people might become trapped between the works and the cliffs if the tide came in quickly.
- Q) What would happen to the plans if the lead-in funding could not be secured?
- A) Mr. Browning advised that the plans relied on this funding and also the outcome of the Environment Agencies survey of the existing sea wall, but alternative sources of funding may have to be sought if the lead-in funding could not be secured.
- Q) Does the survey of the existing sea wall include the possibility of a failure in the cliffs behind it?
- A) Mr. Browning advised that this was taken into account and that engineers from WDDC had accompanied the Environment Agency representatives when they conducted their survey to ensure that issues like this were noted.
- Q) What access to the beach will be included in the plans?
- A) Mr. Browning advised that an access way would be on the top of the new sea wall but that there would be an issue with earth from the cliffs falling onto the access way and possibly blocking it, but the slope stabilisation works may mitigate this.
- Q) Would the church be taken into account in the assessment of the area?
- A) Mr. Edmonds advised that all were aware of the church and works in the slope above the church could help to protect it.
- Q) The back beach seems to have depleted in the past months, was this due to the extended rock armour on the Cobb?
- A) Mr. Edmonds advised that this was an unusual occurrence but it did not seem to be as a result of the extension to the Cobb and the beach was returning to normal.
- Q) How much will the scheme cost and how confident are WDDC that they will secure it?
- A) Mr. Browning estimated that the scheme would cost in the region of £15 - £20 million, but it looked positive that the funding may be secured as there were strong arguments, particularly for the new sea wall and Church Cliff stabilisation works which were essential.

Any Other Business

The Mayor, Cllr Ms. S. Holman thanked Mr. R. Edmonds and Mr. N. Browning for their presentations.

Date of next meeting/Future meetings

The next Coastal Forum meeting will be held on Thursday 30th October at 7pm in the Marine Theatre, agenda to follow in due course.

Summary of Phase 4 Proposed Stabilisation Works

