SIDMOUTH BEACH MANAGEMENT SCHEME – AUGUST UPDATE

INTRODUCTION

Sidmouth and East Beach Management Plan was adopted by EDDC Cabinet in April 2017, the main recommendation of which is to implement a beach management scheme to maintain the protection from coastal flooding and reduce the rate of erosion of the cliffs on East Beach.

The preferred option for doing so recommended by the BMP is to;
  • Construct one (or possibly two) rock groynes on East Beach
  • Shorten the training wall (adjacent to the Fishermen’s area at Port Royal) to allow for maintenance access to East Beach
  • Periodically import new shingle onto the beach
  • Periodically recycle shingle (move it from where it accumulates to areas where it is being lost)

This option has been recommended as it represents the best balance of technical viability, environmental acceptability and cost.

Figure 1 – Initial images of the preferred option

The next stage of the project is to submit an Outline Business Case (OBC) to the Environment Agency for their consideration, they will evaluate the project as a whole before deciding whether to approve funding from DEFRA based on the reduction in flood and coastal erosion risk to be delivered.

Based on work to date, not all of the estimated £9M across the whole life of the project will be funded by DEFRA, with only an estimated £5.7M available based on the number of homes benefiting and the economic cost benefit of protecting these homes. The remaining £3.3M will need to be
secured from partnership funding; initial work with the funding sub-group has identified the following potential sources and during the next stage of the project these will need to be secured:

- Local Levy (funding from the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee)
- East Devon
- Sidmouth Town Council
- South West Water
- Local charities/funds
- Devon County Council Highways
- East Devon Housing
- Developers
- Residents and businesses who benefit
- Visitors

PROGRESS TO DATE

You may have seen Clinton Marine off the coast of Sidmouth in June completing a survey of the seabed including measurement of levels and sampling of sediment. You can see a video of a survey being undertaken on youtube.

The survey data has been quality checked by Plymouth Coastal Observatory who manage the coastal monitoring program for the area, and the sediment samples analysed by an accredited laboratory before being sent to the British Geological Survey who collate geological information from around the Country.
Sidmouth Beach Management Scheme  
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In parallel to this Royal Haskoning DHV (RHDHV) have been appointed to produce the OBC for the project. RHDHV are an independent international engineering and project management consultancy with a good track record of delivering the computer modelling, design and environmental impact assessment for similar projects.

RHDHV are leading the work from their Exeter office, with support from their other offices across the UK. The work undertaken has involved:

- reviewing the project data, identifying any further information required and obtaining that from the relevant bodies
- discussing the detail of the computer modelling to be undertaken with the Environment Agency
- reviewing the relevant EA computer model that will form the basis of their work
- finalising the detailed modelling methodology for sign off
- planning the ground investigations required for the outline design
- meeting with planners, and statutory consultees to confirm the scope of Environmental Impact Assessment

**NEXT STEPS**

The overall program is to submit the OBC to the Environment Agency next Summer (2018) and this is broken down into the following steps

- **Autumn 2017**
  - use survey data to set up models of waves, and shingle movement in response to storm conditions
  - model flooding from the above nearshore wave conditions and update assessment of the predicted flood damages
  - confirm scope of Environmental Assessments with relevant statutory bodies
  - update estimates of DEFRA funding

- **Winter 2017/18**
  - Review benefit cost ratio for the scheme
  - Begin outline design for the beach management scheme
  - Test beach management scheme using model of shingle movement

- **Spring 2018**
  - Discuss outline design with contractors to refine scheme
  - Complete outline design
  - Complete environmental appraisal

- **Summer 2018**
  - Update cost estimates based on outline design
  - Complete OBC for submission to EA review group

During the course of the project we will continue to liaise with the local community through the stakeholder group as well as public consultation events at key points, and more focused consultation around specific items such as water access.

If the scheme is approved and funding secured, the earliest construction could feasibly start would be in 2019.