

East Devon District Council

Notes of meeting of the Steering Group for the Sidmouth Beach Management Scheme, held at Council Offices Sidmouth on Wednesday 10 January 2018

Attendance list at end of document. The meeting started at 2.00pm and completed at 3.32pm.

Welcome and introduction

Councillor Tom Wright chaired the meeting in the absence of Councillor Phil Twiss. The Chairman welcomed everyone present and members of the Steering Group introduced themselves.

Notes of the 13 September 2017

The notes of the previous meeting of the Group were agreed, subject to the following comments:

A point was clarified by [REDACTED] relating to the benefits of a scheme not being attributed to Pennington Point, as when that point erodes, there is an ongoing impact on the River Sid.

[REDACTED] sought clarification that the £40k additional costs for Option S4 were extra over, and addition to the costs already committed for modelling/design of Option S1. [REDACTED] confirmed that £25k of the £40k was associated with the additional modelling work.

Outline business case phase programme summary and interim report

Representatives of Royal Haskoning DHV outlined the two phases of the programme: phase one covering modelling, economic baseline and investigation; and phase two covering optioneering, option appraisal, outline design, EIA consultation and OBC submission.

- Work to date - RHDHV outlined the flooding and erosion modelling in consideration of the “do nothing” scenario, looking at this in greater detail, building on the work already undertaken by the previous consultants. Nothing contradictory had been found in undertaking that work;
- Offshore winds and wave conditions analysis - Graphs showed the analysis under storm events on both the town frontage and the River Sid training wall, using the SWAN model for nearshore wave conditions;
- River sid wall - the existing BMP assessment had been reviewed and cliff erosion predictions studied, with an image produced on the impact of degree of land loss and erosion extent under the “do nothing” scenario;
- Beach profile analysis - this had been studied to help inform overtopping analysis. A moving image of how waves impacted on the beach was shown to the Group with the existing defences;

- TuFLOW flood propagation modelling – the Group were shown an image of the impact of flooding for a storm event for the “do nothing” scenario, and how that varied over time for 20, 50 and 100 years’ time;
- Flood risk economic damages – the breakdown of damages was explained, covering direct residential, commercial and vehicle damage; indirect evacuation, emergency service costs and health damages; electricity costs for clean up; and risk to life. This gave a total of a potential £72,000,000 cost of flood damage, with the final benefit of the scheme to be confirmed when the “do-something” scenario has been modelled.
- It was queried whether the do nothing damages would be higher if the erosion rate, and extent of which the River Sid defences were exposed during SE storms was increase. RHSK explained that capping of flood damages occurs fairly early on, and therefore this may have limited impact on economics.
- Sediment transport model – the Group were presented with pictures of sediment changes at various points along the town frontage and the River Sid training wall. Explanation was given on the model used to predict the energy of waves and collection of sediment at key points along the area examined.
- Work continued on the Environmental Impact Assessment, including preparation for public exhibition.

Ground investigation findings

The Group were shown visual representation of the sites of trial pits, undertaken in November 2017. The results were as expected, confirming the levels of sandstone and mudstone beneath East Beach, with the training wall sitting on sandstone. RHDHV have confirmed that further borehole investigations are not required.

Phase 2 and consultation

The next steps were set out to the Group, covering:

- Develop, test and refine the option
- Obtain contractor input into the design
- Economic assessment of “do something” option
- Continue Environmental Impact Assessment
- Undertake public exhibitions
- Prepare the Outline Business Case submission

A request was made for the next meeting of the Group to be prior to the first public exhibition date, in order for Group members to familiarise themselves with the exhibition information. Steering group members were invited to attend on the day, to assist with communicating the scheme to the general public.

Partnership funding update

The group were updated on the capital bid for a further £300K, and work in contacting other agencies to start agreeing a level of contribution. Letters will be sent to both residents and businesses that stand to benefit from the scheme. Coastal Communities Funding will also be re-examined to determine if it could be

applied to the scheme. Any contributions had to be agreed in principle prior to the OBC, so that the EA have sufficient confidence to commit DEFRA funding.

In response to a question about ongoing maintenance costs, it was confirmed that EA grants did not cover this, but the lifespan of the plan allowed a review of what was required and if grant funding was available for replenishment of beach areas.

The Crown Estate remained a stakeholder in the process and will be consulted as part of the EIA. It was expected that their involvement would be increased as the project neared the point of delivery of the scheme, both as a statutory consultee and landowner.

Any other business

A further update was given on Alma Bridge from [REDACTED]. A site investigation had been undertaken, and the design of the bridge completed. Next steps were to consult on the design before making an application to the EA and the local authority for permission.

Clarification was sought on two actions from the previous meeting. Confirmation of the additional modelling cost would be sent to [REDACTED]

It was requested that the technical note regarding the costing of Option S4 was recirculated to the steering group.

It was queried whether the review of comparative costs between Option S1, and S4 had been undertaken. [REDACTED] confirmed that a high level review had been undertaken, and the magnitude of

It was queried whether the optimism bias (risk allowance) of 60% used during the BMP would reduce. [REDACTED] confirmed that any optimism bias, or risk allowance included in the OBC would be reviewed, and an appropriate and justifiable value included in the costs. Any optimism bias or risk allowance included would need to be in line with treasury guidance.

Liability of land owner on cliff fall would still be subject to obtaining personal legal advice, but in discussion was advised that liability was only likely to fall to the land owner if that land owner could be proved to be culpable and negligent.

Date of next meeting

The date will be confirmed, but will likely be held week of 15th March prior to the first public consultation date.

Attendance list

Steering group members present:



