

Broadstairs Flood and Coast Protection Scheme

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| Overview and Scrutiny Panel | 19 September 2023 |
| Report Author | Luke Glover |
| Portfolio Holder | Cllr Steve Albon - Cabinet Member for Cleansing and Coastal Services |
| Status | For Decision |
| Classification: | Unrestricted |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Reasons for Key | An Executive Decision that involves incurring expenditure anticipated to be £250,000 or above |
| Ward: | Viking |

Executive Summary:

Following an erosion and flood risk study focussing on the area around Broadstairs Harbour, an application for grant funding was made to the Environment Agency. A grant with a value of £880k has been secured to undertake a Flood and Coast Protection scheme. The scheme is 100% grant funded.

Recommendation(s):

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel are asked to:

1. Note and scrutinise the report and consider any representations to Cabinet in advance of its meeting on 21 September 2023.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

The scheme award has been allocated £880k for the construction phase based on fully costed estimates drawing upon recent coast protection works undertaken in Kent by the East Kent Engineering Partnership (of which the council is a member authority).

This scheme is already included in the capital programme for 2023/24.

To ensure that a competent contractor will be appointed, the scheme will be tendered utilising the East Kent Engineering Partnership Select List quality evaluation methodology, as has been the case with all major flood and coast protection works undertaken in Thanet over the last 10 years.

Legal

The project will be undertaken in accordance with national conditions for Flood Defence Grant in Aid set out by the Environment Agency. The contract and tender documents for the scheme will be reviewed by the legal department

Risk Management

A risk register has been developed and formed part of the grant application submission. The Risk register considers risks such as variation in project costs, financial security of the contractor, high inflation, weather disruption and environmental factors. The risk register will be maintained as a live document and will be updated as the project progresses.

Corporate

This scheme is proposed under the council's permissive powers in accordance with the Coast Protection Act 1949.

The harbour area of Broadstairs is a popular coastal location requiring consideration of heritage and amenity value. The Technical Services team has consulted with conservation officers, Historic England and Natural England in designing a scheme that is low impact while providing the best possible protection against flooding and coastal erosion in the medium term.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

The proposal has limited relevance to the duty in respect of the protected characteristics. It is the officer's assessment that the duty is not engaged by this proposal.

here is a possibility of short term impacts on pedestrian and vehicular access to parts of the pier head and harbour area as a result of the works. Every effort will be made to maintain access and ensure accessibility is considered in any temporary arrangements. Such impacts will be confined to the short term during the construction and improvement works.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Environment
- Communities

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Following an Environment Agency grant funded study into flood and coastal erosion risk in Broadstairs, the Environment Agency has awarded the council a grant of £880k to undertake a Flood and Coast Protection scheme at Broadstairs. The scheme is 100% grant funded.

- 1.2 The project will reduce the risk of flooding, coastal erosion and the loss of public and residential assets located in Viking Bay which are protected by the coastal defences and pier head. Primarily the works will include:
- The stabilisation of the existing sea defences (the pier head) at Viking Bay
 - new flood walls and gates to reduce the property level flood risk at the bottom of Harbour Street.
- 1.3 The project will improve resilience to wave overtopping, which is predicted to increase with climate change over the next 100 years. Currently, the existing defences are showing signs of deterioration which could eventually lead to failure of the seawall and pier head in the future with the potential consequence of the loss of Viking Bay beach and subsequent flooding and cliff erosion.
- 1.4 Planning permission for the scheme was granted in June 2023 and the work is programmed for Spring 2024 following competitive tendering. Planning 14/06/2023 F/TH/22/1628 and L/TH/22/1629

2.0 Current Situation and Proposed Works

- 2.1 The sea defences at Broadstairs Harbour are in poor condition with residual life estimated at 10 years. Refurbished in the 1970s the pier head is constructed of battered concrete precast facing blocks supported by a sheet steel piled foundation and laid on an in-situ mass concrete wall which is constructed over the previous Stone/timber frame pier head.
- 2.2 The facing blocks now need to be secured and properly pointed to prevent further deterioration and erosion of the pier structure. In a do-nothing scenario the pier head could be eroded to the extent that it is a risk of catastrophic failure during a significant storm event within the next 10 years.
- 2.3 The sea wall to the North of the pier has been maintained but is more than 50 years old, there are some damaged coping stones and some loss of pointing. In a do nothing scenario the seawall condition will deteriorate leading to a loss of concrete blocks, rapid erosion of the sea wall and therefore cliff erosion will resume threatening cliff top property. In a do minimum scenario where the sea wall is repaired and maintained to a good standard the residual life can be extended to approximately 100 years with further major maintenance in the future.
- 2.4 Properties at the bottom of Harbour Street are currently protected from the sea only by the beach and a concrete slipway which provides access to the beach from Harbour Street. The beach level is maintained through beach management activities and the slipway is in good condition. However due to sea level rise and the impacts of climate change, the risk of flooding to Harbour Street is increasing with the likelihood of property level flooding becoming far more likely in the medium term.
- 2.5 The project proposes new flood walls and gates to compartmentalise the bottom of Harbour Street, protecting the road from wave overtopping from the East and inundation from the South. The scheme will provide a 1:200 year standard of defence based on 2122 sea levels.

- 2.6 Importantly the option to improve the standard of flood defence to Harbour Street does not require any works to be undertaken on the designated and protected foreshore.
- 2.7 The scheme will include the securing and repointing of the pier wall facing blocks to ensure the continued protection that the pier provides from flood and coast erosion. The pier head is a vital structure that maintains the high sand level in Viking Bay, protecting properties from flooding and cliff erosion.
- 2.8 Lastly the scheme will include works to the sea walls and the fishermans quay to the East of the pier.

3.0 Environmental Designations

- 3.1 Like much of the Thanet coastline the foreshore to the east of the harbour is designated for a number of its features. Designations include:
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
 - Special Area of Conservation
 - Special protection Area
 - Marine Conservation Zone
 - RAMSAR Site
- 3.2 Following consultation with Natural England the recommended option will avoid works on the chalk foreshore to minimise any environmental impact.
- 3.3 Should any works take place over winter months (between October - March inclusive), higher impact activities will be stood down over the high tide period to minimise disruption to overwintering birds.
- 3.4 All works will be undertaken in accordance with an agreed Construction Environmental Management Plan.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel are invited to review and scrutinise this report, making any agreed recommendations to Cabinet in advance of its meeting on 21 September 2023.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 This proposal will be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 21 September 2023.

Contact Officer: Luke Glover - Deputy Technical Services Manager
Reporting to: Mike Humber - Director of Environment

Annex List

Annex 1: [Proposed Site Plan](#)

Annex 2: [Proposed Elevations](#)

Annex 3: [Proposed Flood Gate Wall and Railing Details](#)

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Matthew Sanham (Head of Finance, Procurement and Risk)

Clive Bowen (Finance Manager)

Legal: Sameera Khan (*Interim Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer*)