

# Viking Bay to Dumpton Gap Sea Wall Repair Scheme

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

## Executive Summary:

A capital maintenance project is proposed to prolong the design life of the existing sea wall between the southern headland of Viking Bay and Dumpton Gap in Broadstairs. An Environment Agency grant with a value of £406k has been secured to undertake the proposed works which will maintain the standard of defence and delay more expensive capital works for up to 50 years. 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 has been allocated £406k 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 expenditure is already included in the capital programme for 2023/24.

### 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 coastline and coastal access is important to the local economy and particularly to seasonal trade. This sea wall and coastal protection asset provides vital public amenity in the form of a coastal promenade with multiple access points to the foreshore for the benefit of beach users. The sea wall prevents erosion by the sea of the high amenity value upper promenade and greensward between Broadstairs and Dumpton. These assets are an important part of the local environment that are maintained by the council in accordance with its corporate priorities.

## **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.

There is a possibility of short term impacts on pedestrian access along the promenade 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 The 1.1km long seawall between Viking Bay and Dumpton Gap was constructed almost 60 years ago and requires major maintenance in order to maintain the standard of protection and prevent failure in the medium term.
- 1.2 A capital maintenance project is proposed to prolong the design life of the existing sea wall. A grant with a value of £406k has been secured to undertake the proposed works which will delay more expensive capital works for up to 50 years. The scheme is 100% grant funded.

## **2.0 Current Situation and Proposed Works**

- 2.1 The key objective of the project is to reduce the risk of coastal erosion and the loss of public and residential assets located on the chalk cliffs immediately inland of the coastal defences.
- 2.2 Currently, the existing defences are showing signs of damage which will eventually lead to failure of the seawall. As a consequence, Due to the intrinsic nature of the cliff and the defences any failure will present a significant health and safety risk and would require a permanent exclusion zone around the area. Deposition of concrete, reinforcement, and fill materials from the failed defences onto the sensitive foreshore would likely lead to environmental damage. Loss of the defences and promenade would have significant social and amenity impacts. Property at the top of the cliff will be exposed to increasing erosion risk.
- 2.3 The works will involve the replacement of some of the existing coping blocks. The berm slabs and concrete stepped sea wall units are to be refurbished and if necessary replaced.

## **3.0 Environmental Designations**

- 3.1 Like much of the Thanet coastline the foreshore between Viking Bay and Dumpton Gap 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 Works on the designated chalk platform and reef will not be necessary and no plant will be permitted to drive on any sensitive parts of the foreshore.
- 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: [Location Plan](#)

### **Corporate Consultation**

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

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