Strategy Committee
17 July 2018
Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements Phase V, Strengthening and Renovation of the Cobb. Funding For Construction Work

For Recommendation

Portfolio Holder:
Cllr J Russell - Environmental Protection and Assets

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Statutory Authority
Coast Protection Act 1949 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009

Purpose of Report

1.1 To update committee of progression of the Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements scheme, Phase V – strengthening and renovation of the Cobb as per the decision of the Executive Committee on 15/12/2016.

1.2 To recommend budget approval for a funding contribution for the construction work for scheme. This requires appointment of contractors to carry out the works.

Recommendations

2.1 That the Council approve a £1.0M contribution toward an overall scheme cost of £2.30M. This is required to construct the officer recommended preferred option for the scheme. Other scheme options can also be considered as detailed in Appendix A. Monies are partly made up of corporate reserves and Coastal Protection S106 allocation.

2.2 If construction is approved, to increase the preparatory works budget (200k) by 25k to fund the cost of the consulting engineers during the construction work after all preparatory works are complete.

Reason for Decision

3.1 As owner and coast protection authority, the Council is responsible for maintenance and repair of the Grade 1 Listed Cobb harbour structures to an appropriate standard.

3.2 Preparatory work has revealed significant signs of scour which is destabilising the structure. Surfacing is generally poor; restricting access for the less-abled, the landing quay is not fit-for-purpose and services to the Cobb Buildings and landing quay are in poor condition.

3.3 To advance construction based upon findings from the preparatory work of phase 5 of the Council's Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements Scheme, which will enable the Cobb to remain in safe use as a historic harbour and a vital part of the town's coastal defences.

Scheme Options & Design

4.1 The Condition Assessment Report highlighted a list of key issues that require an engineering solution. They were collated into different sections including; scour, structural stability, surfacing, health & safety and general maintenance.

4.2 After further analysis, investigation and consultation, the preferred design option of the scheme was separated into 5 different elements as listed below. Appendix B contains the design drawings for the different elements.

- Scour Protection
- Structural Monitoring
- Wave Overtopping Wall
- Surfacing
- Amenity

Definition & Reasons for Design (see Appendix B for design drawings):

Scour Protection: Construct scour protection on the seaward and harbour toe of the Cobb structure to prevent scour. This will complement existing scour protection on the structure. This is required to prevent loss of fill material within the structure and undercutting of it.

Structural Monitoring: Implement a detailed structural monitoring regime over the life of the scheme (approx. 50 years). This element has to be implemented with the scour protection element as it monitors the ongoing stability of the structure once the gradual loss of fill material from within the structure has ceased.

Wave Overtopping: Prevent wave overtopping of The Causeway section of the Cobb during high wave action as seen in 2014 which caused significant damage and an electrical fire due to damage sustained to the services. This will also significantly reduce the risk of injury to the public in this location.
This element has two sub-options: Masonry Wall or Rock Armour. Masonry wall, clad in Portland Roach Stone, is included in the Officer Preferred option (see below and Appendices).

Surfacing: Improvements to surfacing at specific locations and construction of a 1.2m wide path along the Cobb to provide more even, smoother access, especially for less-abled visitors. Path to be made of

Portland Roach Stone. This element also includes the improvement and resurfacing of the landing quay area.

Amenity: Includes utility services upgrades, H&S Improvements and lighting upgrades. The services in the structure are in poor condition and need to be upgraded to current design and safety standards. The upgraded services to the landing quay area is included in this element. The services upgrade can only happen, within the proposed budget, if the surfacing work takes place concurrently as the services will be buried underneath the proposed surface path.

H&S improvements are required that will be subtle but necessary in nature. A barrier and sign on the steps to the high wall is required to help prevent further accidents and fatalities. Other subtle signage is also proposed at steps further along the structure. The lighting upgrade incorporates low level lighting on the inner harbour edge of the low walkway to reduce the risk of people falling in the harbour, especially on the roundabout section. We are also in discussion to remove the ugly street light from the structure.

4.3 There are 5 scheme options. The scheme options incorporate the above elements to greater or lesser degree. The scheme options are detailed in appendix A. In summary they are;

Option	Description	Costs (£)
Do Minimum	Maintain structure as long as possible (10 years)	1,091,931.20
Option 1	Wall, Scour and Structural Monitoring	1,273,911.30
Option 2	Rock, Scour and Structural Monitoring	1,824,416.02
Option 3 (Officer Recommended Option)	Wall, Scour, Structural Monitoring, Surfacing and Amenity	2,299,917.82
Option 4	Rock, Scour, Structural Monitoring, Surfacing and Amenity	2,850,422.54

Background and Reason Decision Needed

5.1 Committee decision from 15/12/2016 to return to committee to discuss funding option once preparatory work results are known. Detailed design is currently underway.

5.2 The Cobb is a working harbour, an important historic structure, a major tourist attraction and a fundamental element of the town's coast defences. The harbour structures, with their rock extensions, form a bay which protects the town frontage from storm waves and keeps the sand and shingle beaches stable.

5.3 Progressive movement of the structure is ongoing and this is apparent in longitudinal cracking and slab separation in both the low and high walkways as the main wall gradually spreads. Cracks and damage to wall facing are also apparent and raise concern over loss of core material and sudden collapse during storm conditions.

5.4 The Council has promoted restoration and strengthening of the Cobb structures as Phase V of its Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements Scheme since the early 1990s. The viable elements of the first four phases are effectively complete. Defra's letter of 21 November 2003 approving the Lyme Regis Coast Protection Strategy stated "This agreement excludes the estimated capital cost of £3.5 million for Phase V pending the Council's consideration of alternative funding sources given that much of the cost is for heritage/tourism purposes rather than coast protection".

5.5 The Council requested that funding should be included in the Environment Agency's Medium Term Plan to cover the coast protection elements of Phase V, with the intention that this sum will be adjusted and advanced in the programme as more detailed and reliable information about the proposals and funding contributions becomes available.

5.6 Major strengthening work to parts of the structure, comprising piling and underpinning of sections of the footings, reinforcement of the walls with stainless steel rods and masonry repairs, were last carried out in the 1980s. Since then the Council has carried out ad-hoc repairs, adding to the patchwork of surfaces making up the low walkway. Some areas are very uneven and it is not always practical to meet conservation requirements and eliminate possible trip hazards. More comprehensive repairs to the surfaces cannot be implemented until the Phase V scheme has been determined.

5.7 Several injuries due to trips are reported each year and the surface is difficult and uncomfortable for wheelchair users. Fish landing facilities are poor.

5.8 Monitoring and structural investigations, partly funded by English Heritage and the Environment Agency, show the structures overall to have been reasonably stable over the last few years and the 1980s strengthening work to be intact and effective.

5.9 The most frequent problem has been storm damage to the low walkway. Heritage requirements and limited maintenance funding make strong, durable repairs difficult and the overall condition of the surfaces has been gradually deteriorating. £170,000 in government emergency grant was spent on repairs and advice from English Heritage following the 2014 storm damage with the repairs also being used as a trial of methods and materials for Phase V.

5.10 On 11 November 2014 the then Director of Environment submitted a Report titled "Lyme Regis Phase 5, Strengthening and Renovation of the Cobb" to Executive Committee. The Report presented 3 options:

Option 1, Do Nothing – This would lead to rapid decline of the structures and walking surfaces, loss of reputation, risk of prosecution, injury claims and structural collapse. The Cobb's harbour and coast protection functions would soon be compromised.

Option 2, Do Minimum – Continuing to carry out basic monitoring and urgent repairs, taking advantage of any outside funding available, may be tenable for a few years. The gradual decline in condition of the structures and walking surfaces would continue, leading to a corresponding increase in the risk of major storm damage and collapse.

Option 3, Work towards Implementing Phase V – This would include:

- detailed structural studies and monitoring
- production and assessment of scheme options
- review of historical reports and preparation of a Statement of Significance and Assessment of Heritage Impact
- financial assessment
- public consultation
- selection and development of a preferred scheme
- outline design and estimates
- applications for formal consents
- production of a Project Appraisal Report
- statutory consultation
- securing funding/financial contributions
- application to the Environment Agency for formal approval and grant

5.11 Executive Committee determined to support in principle Option 3, the preparatory work to advance the proposed Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Phase V scheme. To facilitate this option the Committee also determined that a bid of £200,000 be included in the Corporate Priorities after May 2015.

5.12 Further background information is included in the Report to Executive Committee 11 November 2014 "Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements, Phase V" and Report to Executive Committee 15 December 2016 "Lyme Regis environmental improvements phase V, strengthening and renovation of the Cobb. Application for funding for lead in work".

5.13 A decision is needed in order to provide the necessary funding contribution to progress construction work on the project.

Implications

Corporate Plan

6 The Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement scheme Phase V – Strengthening and Renovation of the Cobb meets Corporate Plan Priorities C2 – Protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment, and C3 – Managing the implications of climate change, including flooding and coast protection.

Financial

7.1 The current budget for the preparatory work, excluding Council staff costs, is £200,000. Approximately £90k of budget is still remaining and is required to fund fees for stage 2 of the contract including detailed design, ground investigation works and consent applications. An extra £25k is required to extend the budget to cover the construction work supervision duties of the consultants.

7.2 Total Phase V scheme cost is £2.30M. £1.0M of Council money is required to make the preferred scheme option viable including a £1.30M contribution from DEFRA. Proposed scheme funding breakdown is:

West Dorset Corporate Reserves	£0.523M
West Dorset Coastal Protection S106 Allocations	£0.477M
DEFRA grant in aid	£1.300M
Total	£2.300M

7.3 Available S106 money that can contribute toward the scheme is £477,170.83. These monies have been received and allocated for coastal protection works within the Lyme Regis area.

Equalities

8 The joint councils' standard clauses are included in contracts.

Environmental

9 Environmental considerations have been assessed within the preparatory works and included within the detailed designs that are being produced. Environmental considerations are also covered within the consultation processes that will be applied for once detailed design is complete. The required consents are applied for and complied with. If necessary an Environmental Impact Assessment will be produced. Environmental requirements are included in contracts and checked during work on site.

Economic Development

10 The proposal is not likely to lead to significant increases in skills, employment or the number of businesses. There will be some short-term disruption during construction work, but maintaining the Cobb in good condition will benefit local traders, commercial fishermen and other harbour users. Surfacing improvement to the landing quay area will improve efficiency and potentially draw more fishing vessels to the harbour.

Risk Management (including Health & Safety)

11.1 Safety risks during the day to day operation of the Cobb are managed under the Council's procedures and insurances.

11.2 Risk assessments and method statements are required and risk management meetings are held with consultants and the main contractor throughout the investigation, design and construction process. Scheme option assessments include risks.

11.3 The Council's contractors and consultants are required to hold appropriate insurances.

11.4 Following the preparatory works, the costs of the remaining lead-in work for the construction phase are more certain. However, work on marine structures in such an exposed tidal environment carries high financial and physical risks. As the proposals were developed, appropriate contingencies

have been included in estimates and proposed ground investigation works will help de-risk the scheme further.

11.5 Forms of contract are used that clearly allocate risks between the Council and its contractors.

Human Resources

12 To adequately manage the remaining preparatory works and then the construction work, a secondment vacancy within the Engineering Projects team needs to be backfilled. This recruitment process is underway.

Consultation and Engagement

13.1 A public consultation event was held in October 2017 which was well attended by representatives from the local community including Lyme Regis Town Council, community groups and local fishing industry. Another public consultation event is planned for late July/early August 2018, depending upon Council approval to proceed with a scheme. A separate public meeting may be arranged at the Planning/Listed Building consent application stage.

13.2 Planning pre-application consultation took place with Council planners and conservation officers in March 2018. These discussions included Historic England and written feedback to outline proposals has been received from Historic England.

13.3 Brief press releases will be issued at key stages of the project. The public consultation events have and will be advertised widely, with participation encouraged. The project team are working with the Council's Communication team on this matter.

13.4 Other consultees will include the Environment Agency, Dorset County Council, Natural England, Lyme Regis Town Council, local residents (Lyme Regis Coastal Forum) and the Marine Management Organisation.

13.5 If formal Marine Management Organisation consent is required for the works there are additional 'statutory consultees'.

Appendices

14 Appendix A: 'Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase V Options Cost Benefit Assessment'.

Appendix B: Draft Detailed design drawings (5no.).

Background Papers

15 Report to Executive Committee 15 December 2016 "Lyme Regis environmental improvements phase v, strengthening and renovation of the Cobb. Application for funding for lead in work".

Report to Executive Committee 11 November 2014 "Lyme Regis Environmental Improvements, Phase V".

Footnote

Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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