

Harbours Advisory Committee

17 September 2025

Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Engineering Update

For Review and Consultation

Cabinet Member:

Cllr J Andrews, Place Services

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director:

J Britton, Executive Director for Place Services

Report author and job title: Matthew Penny, Service Manager Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management

Email: matthew.penny@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: n/a

Report status: Public [Choose an item.](#)

Executive summary

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update and consult with Harbours Committee on the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) engineering activities being undertaken within all three Dorset Council Harbours.
2. **Recommendation(s)**
 - 2.1 Review report and comment.
3. **Reason for the recommendation(s)**
 - 3.1 Update and consult with Harbours Advisory Committee.

4. The report

4.1 Bridport Harbour (West Bay)

a. Dredging

Dredging for both West Bay and Lyme Regis are undertaken as a single dredging operation. The Coastal Risk Management team are supporting the Harbours team to deliver this work. New dredging techniques are being explored, and the Coastal Risk Management team have held positive discussions with Natural England.

Trial Implementation of new Water Injection Dredging techniques are planned for after the current summer holiday season.

b. Inspections and Repairs

Defects identified are programmed within the Coastal Risk Management team's maintenance and repairs work list. Repair works are prioritised as part of the overall repair needs, that are financed from the constrained revenue budget. Health & Safety repairs will take priority within the current repair programme.

2025 inspections have mostly been completed, and more defects have been identified and programmed for repair over the next 5 years. Boat inspections for the difficult to access sections will be undertaken in the first weeks of September. Defects programmed for repair in 2025 will be completed after the summer season ends.

c. Harbour Wall A and B works.

Work to both walls is being progressed as a single project, with Wall B being the more urgent works.

Design for the repairs and remediation of Wall B have been completed. Interim stabilising works behind Wall B have also been completed and has further stabilised the wall. Further construction works to both walls is scheduled to commence in Autumn 2025 but is partly subject to licencing approvals from the Marine Management Organisation and other statutory bodies. Project team members are keeping kiosk owners updated.

Wall A work is in the process of being costed and overall sequencing and delivery of construction is currently being reviewed and necessary approvals applied for as part of the overall works.

4.2 Lyme Regis Harbour

a. Dredging

Dredging for both West Bay and Lyme Regis are undertaken as a single dredging operation. New dredging techniques are being explored, and the Coastal Risk Management team have held positive discussions with Natural England.

Trial Implementation of new Water Injection Dredging techniques are planned for after the current summer holiday season

b. Inspections and repairs

Defects identified are programmed within the Coastal Risk Management (CRM) team's maintenance and repairs work list. Repair works are prioritised as part of the overall repair needs, that are financed from the constrained revenue budget. Health & Safety repairs will take priority within the current repair programme.

Defects programmed for repair in 2025 will be completed after the summer season ends. Annual inspections have started and most were completed in August 2025. Boat inspections for the difficult access sections will be undertaken in the first weeks of September.

c. The Cobb Repairs.

A large void at the toe of the seaward wall has been identified. This significant defect is located within a hard-to-reach section and is deemed to need repair before the proposed Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Phase 5 scheme commences construction.

£350,000 has been allocated for the repairs. Consultants were appointed to assess the void at the gin shop turn and provide a repair option, this report is due imminently. The CRM team intend to build on the initial assessment, complete the design process and appoint a contractor.

d. Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5

Comprises of a civil engineering scheme to strengthen and stabilise The Cobb structure and deliver improvements to the utility services and surfaces.

The scheme is estimated to cost £8.5m. Currently, there is a funding shortfall of £4.16m to deliver the scheme, but the project team are currently awaiting feedback from the Environment Agency on funding allocations. In addition, DEFRA has

launched a consultation on reforming our approach to floods funding, which outlines a new floods investment framework set to take effect from April 2026. This provides an opportunity for Dorset Council to apply for additional government funding to alleviate the current funding shortfall. Once decisions on funding allocations are known, the project team shall assess the impact of any changes to the project and provide further updates.

The project team are continuing discussions with Historic England for pre-application service advice on the outline design submission and are currently awaiting feedback following submission of further supporting evidence by the project team in June 2025. It is vital that agreement with Historic England is reached prior to procuring consultancy services for detailed design. Their support is crucial not only for planning purposes but also for enhancing the likelihood of successfully securing external funding. The project team are actively seeking further discussions with Historic England for further pre-application advice, prior to procuring consultancy services for detailed design.

Construction is anticipated to commence between Winter 2026 to Spring 2027, subject to progress of both funding availability and consenting applications. It is our intention to hold public engagement and awareness sessions in October or November this year following the commissioning of design consultancy services. These events will also explore how and when commercial users in particular access the Cobb and how access can be reasonably maintained – this information can hopefully help find the least disruptive solution to facilitating construction.

Key Milestones:

Task	Programme
Stakeholder engagement	Ongoing
Design Development	Present – Spring 2025
Permits and Licences determination	Present – Autumn 2026
Proposed Construction start	Winter 2026 / Spring 2027

4.3 Weymouth Harbour

a. Dredging

Nothing to note.

b. Inspections and repairs.

Any defects identified during the inspection process are taken up in the Coastal Risk Management (CRM) team's maintenance and repairs work list and prioritised against the wider maintenance needs. Repair works are therefore prioritised as part of the overall repair needs, which are financed from the revenue budget.

2025/26 inspections are near completion, with remaining inspections due in September, as a boat is required to complete them.

This season's repairs will focus on minor repairs to the stone pier and Wall 2, as well as replacing some defective non-return flaps. Works will be undertaken after the summer period to minimise impact on the busy tourist season.

c. Weymouth Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Scheme Phase 1

DEFRA has launched a consultation on Reforming our approach to floods funding, which outlines a new Floods Investment Framework set to take effect from April 2026. Based on current guidance, the Weymouth FCERM Scheme will fall under this new framework, though the final funding rules are yet to be published. We are currently assessing how these changes may affect the development and delivery of the scheme. As a result, submission of the Outline Business Case (OBC) is likely to be delayed.

Technical works on the development of the OBC are still being progressed while appraisal options are being considered. The surface water investigation is moving forward with representation from the relevant Risk Management Authorities.

The table below gives an overview of the current project programme.

Key Milestones:

Task	Programme
Stakeholder engagement	Ongoing
Outline Business Case	Summer 2022 – Summer 2026
Design Development	Winter 2026 onwards
Construction Commencement	Winter 2028

d. Harbour Walls F&G (Peninsula)

The successful tenderer, Knights Brown, has been appointed but the contractual starting date will only be agreed once we have the Marine Licence approved.

At a meeting with the Marine Management Organisation and Natural England in May 2025 it was agreed that the licence could be issued with appropriate conditions to cover seagrass compensation and mitigation of harm or disturbance to seahorses.

Subsequently the MMO advised in August 2025 that they required the seagrass survey before they would issue the licence. The seagrass survey was completed on 15 August 2025, and the report is being compiled. It was recorded at the meeting that a Wildlife Licence will no longer be required.

The Contractor, Knights Brown, and the Consultant, WSP, have attended to the necessary pre-commencement planning conditions which have been examined and accepted. We anticipate that Planning approval should therefore be forthcoming as soon as the MMO licence is issued.

5. Alternative options considered

5.1 n/a

6. Legal considerations

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

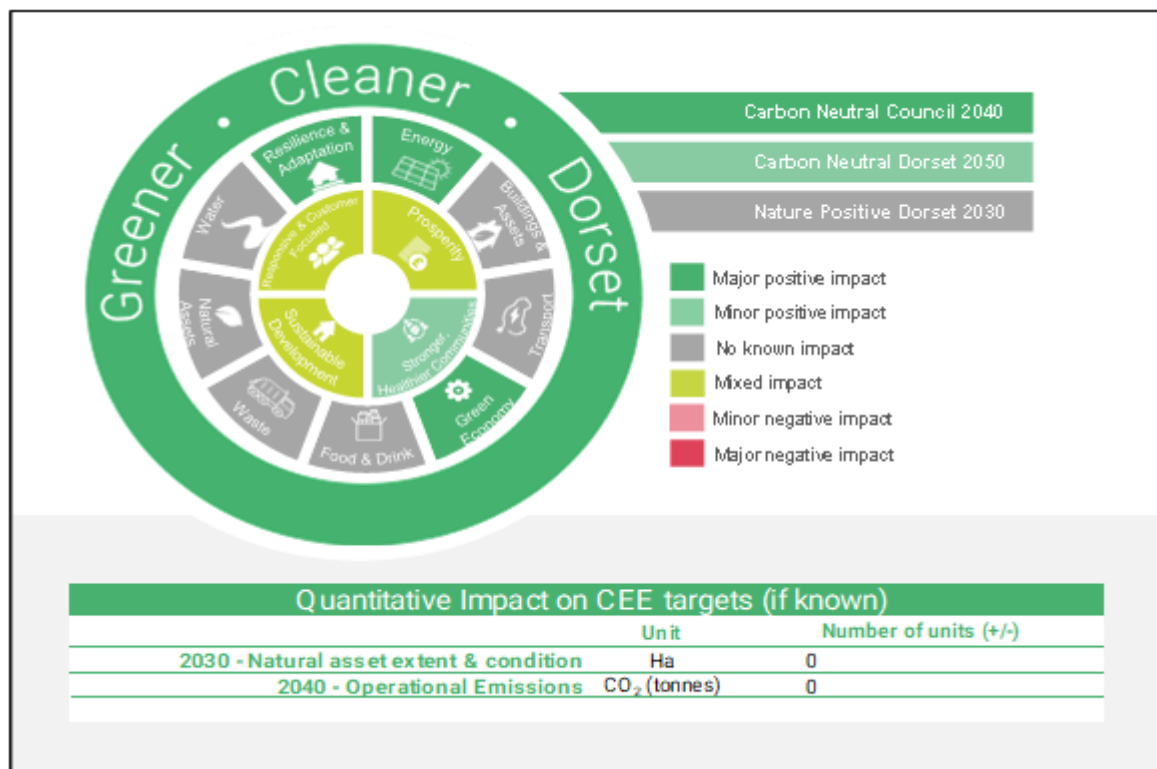
7. Financial implications

7.1 Where individual activities or works note a funding shortfall, there is the potential need and implications for the size of contribution required from Dorset Council and other stakeholders that derive benefit from that work.

7.2 Officers will develop the appropriate financial cases and funding applications for individual projects, activities or work, in alignment with Dorset Councils Financial regulations and processes.

8. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

8.1



8.2 The regular maintenance and repair to engineering assets is beneficial to their remaining life expectancy and therefore has a lower impact upon the climate than replacement schemes. Where future replacement schemes are required, the climate impact will be described in more detail within each respective cabinet paper.

9. Well-being and health implications

9.1 Repair and renewal of harbour infrastructure aids commercial and recreational activity that is both marine and land-based.

10. Other implications

10.1 n/a

11. Risk implications

11.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

12. Equalities

- 12.1 An EQiA is completed for all relevant engineering work that may impact upon people. Therefore, an EQiA was not completed for this committee paper. This approach was agreed with a council equalities officer.

- 13. **Appendices**

- 13.1 Weymouth Harbour Wall Location Map
- 13.2 Bridport Harbour Walls A&B Location Map
- 13.3 Climate Decision Wheel Output

- 14. **Background papers**

- 14.1 n/a

- 15. **Report sign-off**

- 15.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)